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UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

IN

IRELAND.

BY

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UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN IRELAND.

A MOTION, made by an Irish Member at the close of the last Parliamentary session, which received little and rather slighting notice at the time, has raised some issues, both practical and theoretical, in the province of education, of very grave importance. The motion was a demand for a Charter for a Roman Catholic College established some twelve years ago in Dublin, and commonly known as "The Catholic University," though hitherto without the power of granting degrees. It was met on the part of the Government by a counter proposal, to the effect, that, instead of constituting a new university in Ireland by the grant of a charter, the Catholic establishment should be affiliated as a distinct college to one of the universities which now exist, to wit, the Queen's. This compromise was eagerly embraced by the mover, and in general by the representatives of the Catholic party in Parliament, Mr. Hennessy being the single dissentient. The precise form which the Government scheme is destined to take is not yet known; but it has been shadowed forth in a series of announcements which purport to be authoritative, and which—as they proceed from the section of Catholics whom the concession is designed to conciliate, and who have certainly through their leaders been in communication with the Government—may be assumed to embody, with more or less exactness, the principal features of the pending arrangement; and the prospect has elicited a discussion which at all events exhibits very clearly the hopes and the fears of the supporters and the opponents of the proposed change. These hopes and fears alike point to the same result—a re-modelling of the liberal and "mixed" system of State education hitherto maintained in Ireland

in a denominational, which in the present instance means an ultramontane, sense—to a direct reversal therefore of the policy pursued in that country for the last thirty years. When we add that the controversy has brought up, in a practical shape, some of the nicest and most perplexing problems regarding the relations of the State to education, it will be seen that the occurrence is highly deserving of attentive study, whether we regard its bearing on the welfare of Ireland or on the prospects of educational progress.

We shall perhaps best introduce the reader to this controversy by a brief narrative of what has been done in recent years in promoting that department of education in Ireland which is the subject of the present discussion. Down to 1845, Trinity College, in the University of Dublin, formed the only provision made for the higher secular learning in Ireland. Founded in the reign of Queen Elizabeth for the purpose of promoting the Protestant religion, its constitution and character were suitable to the circumstances of its origin. We shall perhaps convey a sufficiently precise notion of this establishment for our present purpose, if we say that it belongs, with many differences in detail, to the same order of educational bodies of which Oxford and Cambridge are the type in this country. It was of course inevitable that, as originally constituted, its basis should be rigidly sectarian; every religious denomination, save that established by law, was excluded alike from its degrees and its emoluments. But towards the end of the last century, under the influence of the more liberal ideas which then began to prevail, Trinity College opened its doors to Roman Catholics for admission to degrees; and a succession of measures, introduced at intervals from that period, and conceived in a spirit of consistent liberality, has placed it now in a position very decidedly in advance, in point of comprehensiveness and national character, of either of our ancient universities; Roman Catholics and Dissenters being now freely admitted to all its degrees, except those of divinity, to its senate and parliamentary constituency, and to a large share of its emoluments. In spite, however, of these substantial reforms, it would scarcely, we should imagine, be maintained by any candid Churchman, that Trinity College—retaining, as it did, its essentially Protestant character and traditions, and still excluding all but Protestants from its higher dis-

tinctions—formed an adequate provision for the higher education in a country of which three-fourths of the population were Roman Catholics. This was the view taken by a Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed in 1835, of which the late Sir Thomas Wyse was chairman. Among other recommendations of this Committee was one for the establishment of four colleges, one in each of the provinces of Ireland, which should extend to that portion of the people not already provided for in the National Schools the opportunity of an education, to borrow the language of the Report, “of the most improved character,” “general, common to all, without distinction of class or creed.” The policy advocated in the Report was adopted by the Government of Sir Robert Peel. It was determined to supplement the Elizabethan university by institutions conceived in the spirit of modern times, and directed to promote the interests of all classes of the community. In 1845, two measures were introduced; one for the re-constitution of Maynooth on an independent footing, and with a liberal endowment, as a seminary for the Roman Catholic priesthood; and the other for the establishment, in the interest of the laity, of three provincial colleges in Belfast, Cork and Galway, constituted on the principle of strict religious equality, and designed to attract the various religious denominations to receive there an education in common: in the words of Sir James Graham, in the speech in which he introduced the measure, “The new Collegiate System was avowedly an extension, and nothing more than an extension, of the present system of National Education”—[that system established in 1831 on the basis of “combined secular and separate religious instruction,” and which had already, in 1845, achieved a remarkable success]—“from the children of the humblest to the children of the upper and middle classes.”

Such was the origin of the Queen’s Colleges: they were opened in 1849; and in 1850, in conformity with the original conception of the scheme, the Charter was granted by which the Queen’s University was founded. In the words of the Charter, its object was “to render complete and satisfactory the courses of education to be followed by students in the said Colleges,” and, with a view to this, it was invested with the power “of granting all such degrees as

are granted by other universities or colleges to students who shall have completed in any one or other of the Colleges the courses of education prescribed and directed for the several degrees:"—the University was thus the natural completion and crown of the collegiate edifice. We need only further say, as regards this part of the case, that, while considerable powers were assigned to the local Colleges, the general government of the central institution, including the fixing of the courses of study for degrees and the appointment of university examiners, was placed with the Chancellor and Senate of the Queen's University.

And now we would ask the reader's attention to an important part of this story—the attitude assumed by the Roman Catholic community towards the new institutions. It was the expectation of the Government of that day—surely not an unreasonable one, considering the essential fairness, and, account being taken of the grant to Maynooth, even liberality, of the arrangement, and further that the scheme was but an extension to the higher education of that plan which had already in the primary schools of the National System been received amongst Roman Catholics with all but universal favour—that the Queen's Colleges and their University would have been accepted by priest and people in the spirit in which they were offered. And for a brief moment there was every prospect that this expectation would be realized in the fullest sense. Doctors Murray and Croly occupied then, as Archbishop of Dublin and Primate, the highest places in the Irish Roman Catholic Church: they had both from the first accepted with cordial loyalty the principle of the National System, which they had aided in working, and the success of which was largely due to their enlightened efforts. They were now, with other leading members of the hierarchy, in communication with the Government on the subject of the Queen's Colleges. With such negotiators the Government had no difficulty in coming to an understanding. The statutes were drawn up, submitted to their inspection, and approved. It was admitted that the securities provided for the protection of "faith and morals" were ample. It will probably sound strange to many people now that amongst the names of the original members of the Queen's University Senate the third in order is that of Daniel Murray, Roman Catholic Archbishop

of Dublin. The priesthood, indeed, were not unanimous : there was an active dissentient minority ; but looking to the influence then exercised by Doctors Murray and Croly, one can hardly doubt that a few more years of their gentle and enlightened rule would have carried with them in support of the Colleges, as it had already carried with them in support of the National Schools, the great body of the priesthood. Most unfortunately for peace and educational progress in Ireland, just at this time—the same year in which the Queen's Colleges were opened—Dr. Croly died ; and he was followed, two years later, by his abler coadjutor. The successor to each was Dr. Cullen, who, appointed in the first instance to the See of Armagh—through a stretch of papal authority exercised in defiance of the immemorial usage of the Irish Church, according to which the *dignissimus* of those recommended for the honour by the clergy of the diocese is selected—was, on the death of Murray, transferred to Dublin. Dr. Cullen's preparation for the post he was now called to fill had been a sojourn of some thirty years in Rome, where, in the capacity of Director of the Irish Department of the Papal Government, he had made himself conspicuous as a zealous supporter of all the extremest pretensions of the ecclesiastical party. It was indeed avowedly to advance the aims of ultramontane policy that he was sent to Ireland, the better to equip him for which service he was furnished with the further authority and distinction of Apostolic Delegate. Scarcely had he entered on his mission, when, we must own with true instinct, he laid his hand upon the State system of mixed education as presenting the most formidable obstacle to his aims. He at once denounced it, alike in the higher and the primary department ; and, finding the Queen's Colleges, then just opened, still struggling with the difficulties of a *début* made in the face of much carefully prepared odium, one of his first acts was to summon a Synod to Thurles for the express purpose of condemning them. As all the world knows, the Colleges were condemned ; but it is a noteworthy fact—as shewing how entirely the course which the Roman Catholic clergy have since followed has been due to the foreign influences imported by Dr. Cullen into the Irish Church—that the condemnation was only carried by a majority of one ; not only this, but—what may not

be so well known—even this slender triumph was obtained by questionable means—through an accident improved by an artifice. During the sitting of the Synod, a bishop, known to be favourable to the Colleges, fell sick: his place was at once filled by Dr. Cullen with a delegate of opposite views; the sick bishop recovered; but it was not deemed advisable to restore him to his place till the vote on the Colleges had been taken. The Queen's Colleges were thus condemned,* and the next step was to start a rival in the same field. For this purpose an apostolic brief was obtained, addressed to "the bishops of Ireland," authorizing and directing them to found a "Catholic University." Ere the Synod of Thurles had separated, a Committee was appointed, consisting of eight bishops, eight priests, and eight laymen (all of course Roman Catholics), to whose charge the organization and government of the projected institution was entrusted. Under these auspices appeared in due time in the middle of the nineteenth century "The Catholic University of Ireland," established, in the admiring language of its accomplished advocate, on "the eternal principles which regulated the relations of the Catholic Universities of the Middle Ages."†

From the sitting of the Synod of Thurles dates the

* Condemned; although (as it may surprise some of our readers to learn) only nine years before, the same mixed system of education which the Queen's Colleges represent had been sanctioned by the same infallible authority in the person of Pope Gregory XVI. We find the fact stated in the following terms by M. de Laveylé in the current number of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, pp. 227, 228: "Après des discussions violentes et prolongées, les Catholiques des deux partis se décidèrent à en appeler à l'autorité infallible, aux décisions de laquelle tous deux faisaient profession d'obéir. Le Pape Grégoire XVI. répondit en 1841 par une lettre que la *propagande* adressa aux évêques d'Irlande. Cette réponse mérite attention, car elle montre que, même dans une question aussi grave que celle d'enseignement primaire, Rome se décide à transiger quand elle croit y trouver son intérêt. Le Pape ne condamne pas l'école laïque, il exige même qu'on n'y enseigne point du tout la religion, de sorte que le principe moderne de la sécularisation de l'enseignement primaire donné par l'état, que l'église combat ailleurs comme une monstruosité, est accepté par elle en Irlande comme en Hollande, c'est-à-dire là, où le pouvoir étant Protestant, elle ne peut espérer régner en souveraine." There is thus, it seems, an infallible declaration in favour of, as well as against, mixed education. We commend the fact to Dr. Corrigan in case he contemplates a reply to the author of "Notes" on his pamphlet.

† *Two Articles on Education*, by Myles W. O'Reilly, B.A., LL.D., M.P. (reprinted from the *Dublin Review*), p. 53.

systematic opposition of the Roman Catholic priesthood to the plan of mixed education in Ireland; and from this point, or rather from the elevation of Dr. Cullen, dates also a new policy in ecclesiastical patronage in Ireland, under which, within twenty years, a complete change has been effected in the character of the Irish Roman Catholic priesthood. In 1848 the spirit of that organization was, with few exceptions, national: under the rule of Dr. Cullen it has become, except in the ranks of the lower clergy, an almost purely ultramontane body, absolutely devoted to ideas of which Rome, and not Ireland, is the originating source.

The Roman Catholic priesthood had condemned the Colleges. We have yet to ascertain how they were regarded by the Roman Catholic people. Now this is manifestly a point of great importance in connection with our present theme. For if the Colleges have failed—or even though they should not have failed utterly, if they have failed as regards the section of the Irish people for whom they were principally intended—the Roman Catholics—then, *solvuntur tabulæ*; whatever may have been the benevolent views of the founders, or the abstract excellence of the scheme, there is no reason that they should be a moment longer maintained: by all means let the advice of Major O'Reilly be adopted, that the officials be pensioned off and the buildings sold. But if, on the other hand, the Colleges have in fact succeeded, if provision has by their means been effectually made for training in the higher learning those of the Irish people—not already provided for by Trinity College—for whom (regard being had to their social position) such training is suitable—provision, too, accordant to their wants and feelings—then, whatever the advocates of change may have to say for themselves on grounds of theory, there is at least no substantial grievance to be remedied; and the question for statesmen in this discussion is not of supplying a felt need—of “filling a gap (to borrow Mr. Gladstone’s phrase) in university education in Ireland”—but of remodelling, with a view to improvement, a system already practically effective. To the importance of this point ultramontane advocates have shewn themselves fully alive, so far as this can be shewn by invariably assuming it in their own favour. According

to them, "the Queen's Colleges have wholly failed,"* while "The Catholic University" is in an eminently successful

* Major O'Reilly, from whose pamphlet we have taken the allegation of entire failure which we have placed in quotation marks, subjoins in a foot-note what we suppose we are to regard as the grounds of that statement :—"This has been admitted (with regret) by both Mr. Cardwell and Sir Robert Peel, and in fact by the Commission appointed to inquire into them."

We confess this statement, proceeding from a writer whom, however much we differ from him, we are inclined to respect, startled us a good deal. We have looked through the expressions of opinion on the subject in question by the authorities referred to, and we shall now lay before our readers a few specimens—we regret our space does not permit us to give more—of the results of our search.

On the 25th of July, 1859, Mr. Cardwell said in Parliament—"he had no hesitation in saying that the Colleges had not met with the success which was originally expected by the founders." This, it must be admitted, is not a favourable opinion; but it is something very far from an admission of entire failure—how far, may be seen by reading it in connection with a passage from a speech made by the same minister a few days previously. On the 22nd of July, 1859, in the debate on Mr. Hennessy's motion, Mr. Cardwell said :—

"He thought they would be of opinion that the result which they had attained to might not indeed be an example of complete success, but was an encouragement and a reason for hope. . . . The attendance of such a number (493) to obtain an education such as was given in these Colleges, was an immense advantage to a country situated as Ireland was. Moreover, it appeared that the pupils had been drawn pretty equally from the various religious bodies into which the population was divided. . . . That surely gave great cause for encouragement for the cause not only of advanced, but of mixed education in Ireland."

These expressions of opinion, it will be observed, were uttered in 1859, at which time the number of students attending the Colleges was little more than half the amount it has since attained. Recognizing this altered state of facts, Mr. Cardwell, speaking on the 5th of July, 1862, on the University vote, said :—

"The Colleges had had great difficulties to contend with, having met much opposition; but the number of students was now continually increasing, and in the last year the number of pupils was 752. Those 750 pupils were nearly equally divided between Catholics, Protestants and Presbyterians. . . . The constant increase of pupils, the numerical equality in the religious opinions of those who entered, and the success of the students in public competition, at which they had to meet students from the older Universities, from Trinity College, and from every school and seminary in the kingdom, all shewed that the sum granted was accomplishing the object for which it was voted—namely, educating indiscriminately the different classes of the people of Ireland."

So far Mr. Cardwell. The citation of Sir Robert Peel in support of the statement that the Queen's Colleges "had wholly failed," we confess we have some difficulty in dealing with. The simple fact is, that Sir Robert Peel's speeches on the Queen's Colleges (and he rarely lost an opportunity of making one) have flowed in a strain of almost unqualified panegyric, equally full of admiration for the past and of hope for the future. His only complaint on the subject has been that their endowments are inadequate; to remedy which defect, as all the world knows, he set on foot a public subscription some years ago, to which he himself munificently contributed. We do injustice to our case by making extracts: still we give the following, which strikes the key-note of the whole :—"I have watched the institution from its commencement, and am

position.* They have not in general offered any reasons for these assertions. But, of course, when a demand was

glad to trace its development. It has opened to three-fourths of the youth of Ireland those academic advantages which they were before denied, and it has rendered immense benefits not only to the cause of popular education, but to the good government and to the character of this country. And what is the criterion of the success of this institution? Not mere numbers. They would be very significant if we looked only to that. But the proof of its success is the great political gain which has been derived by the establishment of a system in Ireland which has opened to men of different religious denominations combined secular instruction upon the broad basis of religious equality."

Lastly, the Commission, appointed to inquire into the Colleges, and which Major O'Reilly cites as "in fact" admitting that they "had wholly failed," delivered its opinion in these words:—

"We should be glad to be able to report a larger number of students availing themselves of the great advantages held out to them in the Queen's Colleges; but we think that the Colleges cannot be regarded as otherwise than successful, when, notwithstanding opposing causes, to which we shall presently allude, they have in their halls, attending lectures, nearly 450 students."

This was in 1858. Major O'Reilly's pamphlet was published in 1863, in which year the numbers had increased from 450, which the Commissioners thought not capable of being regarded otherwise than as an indication of success, to 787; and it is under these circumstances that Major O'Reilly thinks himself justified in quoting the authority of the Commissioners for the utter failure of the Queen's Colleges. The following figures shew the progress of the Colleges from the period of the Commissioners' report down to the present time:

1858-59.....	490
1859-60.....	546
1860-61.....	657
1861-62.....	758
1862-63.....	787
1863-64.....	810
1864-65.....	835

To exhibit fully, however, the opinion of the Commissioners on the Colleges, the passage which we have quoted must be supplemented by the following:—

"We think, however, that the good done by the Queen's Colleges, as great public institutions in Ireland, cannot be estimated merely by the number of students in their halls, or by the successful candidates whom they may send to the great public contests of the educated youth of the empire. We believe that, beyond this, they are, by the honourable competition existing between the students and professors of the several Queen's Colleges amongst themselves, and also by the healthy and, we hope, friendly competition with the University of Dublin, materially aiding in advancing learning in Ireland. We believe that the Colleges are calculated, and we trust the association of students of various creeds and opinions within their walls does operate, to soften those feelings of party antagonism and sectarian animosity which have heretofore unhappily had too extended an existence in Ireland; and that they are rapidly generating a feeling of local self-reliance and of self-respect, and exciting an interest in the culture of literature and science throughout the community at large."

Our readers are now in a position to judge of the value of assertions as to the failure of the Queen's Colleges made by ultramontane writers, of whom, we are bound to say, the most candid and scrupulous we have encountered is Major O'Reilly.

* *Two Articles on Education*, pp. 46, 78.

made to Parliament to reverse the policy it had followed for thirty years, it became necessary to sustain the allegation of failure with some show of proof. This task was accordingly undertaken by the O'Donoghue—the mover of the resolution to which we referred at the opening of these remarks—who produced on the occasion certain statistics from which he drew the desired conclusion. Strange to say, the O'Donoghue's reasons were never traversed by the Government, though directly at variance with the repeated assertions of several of its members who had filled the offices of Lord Lieutenant and Chief Secretary of Ireland. But since the parliamentary debate considerable light has been thrown upon this question from other quarters. Those interested on behalf of the Colleges have supplied the answer which the Government, for whatever reasons, declined to give, and the whole case may now be regarded as pretty fully before the public. We shall endeavour to state briefly how the facts in reference to this important matter stand.

The case for the failure of the Queen's Colleges as presented by the O'Donoghue was briefly this:—The total number of students in Trinity College he set down (we know not on what authority) at..... 1000
The total number in the Queen's Colleges at..... 837

Giving an aggregate receiving education in both of... 1837
Of the 1000 students in Trinity College, but 45 were Roman Catholics: of the 837 in the Queen's Colleges, but 223; that is to say, 268 Roman Catholics altogether as against 1569 Protestants, in an aggregate of 1837, or 14 per cent. With this state of facts he contrasted certain returns of attendance in intermediate schools, from which it appeared that the Roman Catholics and Protestants receiving education in these were about equal in number. His inference was—an inference adopted by the Government—that the Roman Catholics were deterred from going on to the higher education by conscientious objections to the institutions through which it was provided. On these grounds he demanded a charter for "The Catholic University."

The reply on the part of the Colleges has been as follows: Accepting the facts so far as they are given, they do not sustain the O'Donoghue's conclusion. For why is it to be assumed that the relative numbers of Roman Catholics and Protestants in the intermediate schools furnish a just

basis for a comparison of their numbers in the Universities? Are there not in every population large numbers who avail themselves of the education afforded in intermediate schools who never think of prosecuting their studies further? and is it not possible that this class may be larger among Irish Roman Catholics than among Irish Protestants? Notoriously this is the fact. The discrepancy therefore between the comparative returns of the intermediate schools and the universities finds in part an obvious explanation in the social condition of the two classes. But, secondly, it finds a further explanation in a still graver flaw in the O'Donoghue's argument, a flaw so grave as in fact to vitiate it altogether—the entire omission of the principal element of the returns on the Catholic side. The Protestant students are set down at 1569—a number which includes, besides students intended for the several lay callings, the great bulk of those designed for holy orders in the several Protestant Churches; but the 268 Roman Catholics who are contrasted with them comprise *lay students only*. For the education of the Roman Catholics intended for the priesthood the State has provided Maynooth with an endowment of £26,000 a year; and besides Maynooth, several other colleges exist in Ireland maintained from private sources for a similar purpose.* The students attending these, and who have their counterpart on the Protestant side in the divinity classes of Dublin and Belfast included in the quoted figures, the O'Donoghue wholly omits! It illustrates curiously the spirit in which this gentleman's argument was encountered by the Government, that in the discussion which ensued this huge and glaring omission was never detected. It has, however, since been both detected and supplied by less complaisant disputants. As corrected, the comparison stands thus:—

* “Of seminaries for the education of ecclesiastics in 1800, Maynooth, which had existed just five years, was the only one; in 1864, besides the national seminary of Maynooth, which has now an annual endowment of £26,000, and numbers 500 students, our bishops have also established seventeen diocesan seminaries; and in addition to these institutions for the education of the priesthood, several of the religious orders have houses in Ireland where their members are educated for the priesthood: such are the Calced Carmelites, Dominicans, Augustinians, Cistercians, Jesuits, Vincentians, Passionists, Redemptorists, and Oblates of Mary.”—*Progress of Catholicity in Ireland in the Nineteenth Century*: a Paper read before the Catholic Congress of Mechlin, Sept. 1864, by Myles O'Reilly, LL.D., M.P., pp. 15, 16.

Protestant students, lay and clerical, receiving the higher education.....	1569
Roman Catholic, ditto ditto.....	1155

We think it must be allowed that this considerably alters the aspect of the case. But the consideration remains : does the number of Roman Catholic students, thus enlarged, fairly represent the proportion of the body who would in the present social condition of Ireland naturally aspire to an academic status? Now on this point an accurate criterion is plainly not attainable ; but such facts as the following will serve to give the reader an approximately correct idea as to how the matter stands. It appears* that in an aggregate of 6483 members composing the learned professions in Ireland, the Roman Catholic proportion is 2219, or 33 per cent. : in the aggregate magistracy Roman Catholics stand for 24 per cent. ; amongst those returned in the census as “ladies and gentlemen,” for 27 per cent. These facts, we say, do not afford an accurate measure of the comparative need amongst Roman Catholics for university education ; but they furnish an approximate standard, which taken in connection with the statistics of the higher education just given, justifies us, we think, in asserting that, as regards this department of instruction, Roman Catholics in Ireland are already not badly provided for.

Such, substantially, has been the reply on the part of the Colleges. It is, in our opinion, as conclusive as a reply founded on mere statistical data can be. We will now add a consideration which, if we are not mistaken, renders the argument complete, and converts strong presumption into something very like positive demonstration. A common objection urged against the Queen’s Colleges, and, we own, with some plausibility, is, that they foster among the people a habit of looking to the State for a career. Major O’Reilly has adopted this amongst other charges. In a foot-note to page 31 of his pamphlet he thus states the point in somewhat triumphant style :—

“We will stake our reputation for accuracy on a very simple test : let any one of our readers go into a national school, and after a little conversation with the cleverest lad in it, find out what his highest aspirations are : we will answer for it they will

* See the Table of the Census setting forth the “occupations” of the population.

be found to be a Government clerkship or an appointment in the Post Office. Let him also try a Queen's College, and ten to one, the goal of the student's ambition will be found to be a cadetship in the constabulary, a clerkship in one of the public offices, or a Government appointment in India."

Now, passing by the case of the National Schools, with which we are not at present concerned, we have no doubt that, as regards the Queen's Colleges, the learned author's accuracy would be sustained by the experiment. Beyond all question, a considerable proportion of the Queen's College students look for their future career to such openings as are offered by the constabulary, the public offices and India; but what does this prove? That the Queen's Colleges foster a habit of dependence upon State employment? We are paradoxical enough to think that the tendency to look to the State for employment follows rather the amount of patronage at the disposal of the State, than the means which exist for qualifying for the effective discharge of such State work as is to be done: we venture even to believe that if the Queen's Colleges ceased to exist to-morrow, there would not be an Irish candidate the less for the public offices. The effect would be felt, as it seems to us, not in the number of candidates, but in their qualification; nor can we conceive anything better calculated to correct the evils of the bureaucratic spirit than the liberalizing effects of an university education. But, not to dwell on this point, what does the fact—for fact no doubt it is—to which Major O'Reilly calls attention prove? That there is a gap in university education in Ireland still to be filled up? Rather does it not conclusively establish the very point which Major O'Reilly and his allies are never weary of denying—the practical success of the Queen's Colleges; since it shews that the numbers of the Irish population to whom university studies are through their means accessible, is largely in excess of those whom the private demand for intellectual services furnished by the learned professions will absorb? No student in the Queen's Colleges who saw a prospect of success in one of the learned professions would think of offering himself as a candidate for the constabulary or the public offices; but the professions being, like most other industrial walks in Ireland, much overcrowded, students, not conscious of more than average

ability, but who have received some tincture of university culture, will naturally prefer the constabulary or the public offices to a mere mechanical or purely rural calling. This is the true explanation of the fact—an explanation so obvious that we venture to say no one could have missed it who had not a theory to support. Had it been Major O'Reilly's object to prove that the Queen's Colleges had overdone their work, the test which he proposes of his accuracy would have been also much to his general purpose: his object being to prove that their work has been left undone, the verification of his accuracy necessarily results in the defeat of his argument.

To the argument, in the position to which it has now been brought, there is but one objection which we can imagine a candid opponent of the Queen's Colleges to advance—the suggestion that, though the Queen's Colleges have in fact succeeded, they have succeeded only as a *dernier ressort*; that the Roman Catholics have gone to them because they desired university education, and had no other means of obtaining it. But unfortunately for the case of the ultramontanes, they have, by the establishment of their model institution, effectually estopped themselves from this reply. It can scarcely be said that the Queen's Colleges are a *dernier ressort*, while there is the alternative for students which this institution offers. If the Roman Catholics entertain conscientious objections to the Queen's Colleges, is there not abundant room for them in "The Catholic University"? We shall be told "The Catholic University" has not a Charter; which is true; but if "The Catholic University" cannot confer degrees on its *alumni*, London University can, and does.* It may not be generally known

* And it would seem by methods entirely in accordance with the views of the extreme Catholic party, at least if Major O'Reilly may be taken as an exponent of those views. In reference to this point he writes: "The London University does not undertake to teach, or to regulate the teaching of the different institutions whose pupils present themselves at its examination; nay, it carefully avoids, even in laying down the subject of examinations, anything like a dictation as to the opinions to be taught: and for this reason a general statement of the subjects of examination in moral philosophy has been substituted by the Senate for an enumeration of certain works of Butler and Paley; as the latter might, it was thought, be looked upon as requiring an assent to the teachings of those writers.....Thus education is left absolutely free and voluntary; and the State only interferes to ascertain results, and that only through the medium of bodies wholly independent of Government control."

that, according to a recent admirable arrangement entirely in keeping with its true character, that body now holds its examinations in all parts of the United Kingdom ; indeed, in all parts of the British Empire. This year one matriculation examination was held in the Mauritius, another in the Irish town of Carlow. It is a central institution with its centre everywhere. Practically, therefore, as regards facilities for obtaining degrees, the students of the Queen's Colleges enjoy no advantage which is not shared by those of the rival institution. Nor can it be said that the former are successful through the superior attractions which, as State institutions, they hold out ; for it seems—a fact creditable to the zeal of its promoters—that, even in the matter of endowments, “The Catholic University” stands in a position little, if at all, inferior to that occupied by a Queen's College ;* and if we admit that there is something in State *prestige*, it must be admitted, on the other hand, that there is also something in spiritual *prestige*.

So far the rival institutions stand, in regard to the prospects which they open to students, pretty nearly on a par ; but, over and above the considerations which have been adverted to, there is one more which must be taken account of, if we would fairly appreciate the value of the experiment made by the Queen's Colleges' system on the intellectual tastes of the Irish people. The Queen's Colleges have succeeded not merely against the legitimate rivalry of an institution founded on different principles, but—a cardinal fact in this controversy—against the illegitimate and tyrannical opposition of a priesthood, who have refused to leave the decision to the unbiassed judgment of those whom the question concerned,—against an opposition availing itself of all the arts at its command for inspiring superstitious terror, of denunciation from the altar, exclusion from sacraments, in a word, of expedients resembling rather the spiritual appliances of Jesuit despots dictating to Paraguayan savages than remonstrances fitted to be addressed to reasonable and civilized men. For example, every Roman Catholic entering a Queen's College does so under a fire of this kind :—

* According to Major O'Reilly (*Progress of Catholicity*, p. 15), the sum raised (partly by subscriptions from abroad) for the first foundation of the “Catholic University” was £40,000, which has since been sustained by an annual collection of £8000, about the income of one of the Queen's Colleges.

"The Holy Father sees the conspiracy that has been organized to withdraw the education of youth from the influence of the Catholic Church; and in the anguish of his paternal heart he declares that the result will be moral and intellectual corruption. He invites us all, clergy and laity, to join with him in deploring that Satanic scheme for the ruin of faith in the rising generation. Parents and guardians of young men are to understand that by accepting education in them [the Queen's Colleges] for those under their charge, they despise the warnings, entreaties and decisions of the Head of the Church. . . . Adhering to the discipline in force in this diocese, we once for all declare that they who are guilty of it shall not be admitted to receive the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, or of Penance, whilst they continue in their disobedience."*

Are we unreasonable in concluding that popular success, achieved against opposition such as this, proves something more than simple preference for the denounced system on the part of those who accept it? It seems to us that nothing short of singular adaptation to the wants and aspirations of the Irish people would account for so striking a phenomenon.

It would seem, then, that "the gap" in university education in Ireland has yet to be discovered: in plain terms, there is not a tittle of evidence to shew that any appreciable proportion of Irish Roman Catholics are by conscientious objections, or by any other cause than their social position and circumstances, excluded from the existing Irish universities. Let us now add to the presumptive proof of what has not been omitted, the positive evidence of what has been performed. Omitting details, then, the general results accomplished by the Queen's University and its Colleges in a career of fifteen years are these: they have in that time educated 3330 Irishmen, that is to say, 957 members of the Established Church, 938 Roman Catholics, 1197 Presbyterians, and 238 of other denominations. They are at the present moment educating more than at any previous time; their students now being within one-fifth as numerous as those of Trinity College, Dublin, and within one-third as numerous as those of the University of Oxford. In a period of fourteen years the Queen's University has conferred 886

* Pastoral of Doctor Derry, Bishop of Clonfert, addressed last March to the faithful of his diocese.

degrees (exclusive of diplomas and *ad eundems*); the number conferred by the London University during the corresponding period of its career being 841, or about 5 per cent. less.* The Colleges have since their establishment trebled the number of Roman Catholic laymen receiving university education.† The quality of their education, as shewn by every available test, is not inferior to that obtainable in any of the older universities. Lastly, they have eminently succeeded in what was a leading object of their establishment—the bringing together in the same class-rooms of students from all the various religious bodies in the country.

We have been anxious to dispose of the questions of failure and practical grievance before engaging in the discussion of the projects of university reform, which the announcement by the Government that they were prepared to concede some modification of the existing system has naturally brought upon the carpet. The course of the controversy has already disclosed the fact, that the ideas of those who criticise the present arrangements do not run in a single channel. Under the assumed banner of “freedom of education,” two distinct, and to some extent conflicting, policies are advocated; one of these, that of the ultramontane party proper, aims avowedly (its liberal watchword notwithstanding) at the erection of “The Catholic University”—an institution, it will be remembered, established at the instigation of the Pope, and now worked through a committee of which two-thirds are Roman Catholic ecclesiastics—into a position of paramount and pervading authority over the

* We borrow these figures from a “Statement adopted by the Graduates of the Queen’s University in Ireland, assembled in Public Meeting in Belfast on Wednesday, 6th December, 1865,”—a paper which gives with admirable clearness and precision all the important facts of the question.

† At p. 47 of Major O’Reilly’s pamphlet, the following passage occurs: “On the other hand, the recognized authorities of the Catholic Church would decide, with judgment and prudence, what changes were necessary to remove the objections *which prevent Catholics attending Cork College*.” Considering that, when this was written, there were 123 Catholics on the rolls as attending Cork College—a fact with which Major O’Reilly would surely not have failed to acquaint himself—we are driven to suppose that that gentleman refuses the name of “Catholics” to those who attend a Queen’s College. In this he may or may not be justified; but it seems to us that it would have been only fair, before adopting this course, to have apprized his readers of this his habit. We call attention to the circumstance, because it may furnish a clue to his meaning, and possibly to the meaning of others who share his opinions, when they assure us that “the Queen’s Colleges have wholly failed.”

whole higher education of Roman Catholics in Ireland; the other—whatever may be our judgment on its general merits—would seem at least to be conceived with a *bona fide* desire to promote educational freedom according to the ideas of those who support it. We are even disposed to suspect that its advocates (who, we may observe, are Roman Catholics, but laymen) have, consciously or unconsciously, not been uninfluenced by a desire to counteract the aims of the *parti prêtre*; though, we own, we have been led to this conclusion, more from the violence with which the policy in question has been assailed by that party, than from anything that we can discover in the proposals put forward calculated to offer an effectual obstruction to its designs. However this may be, our object now is to place before our readers each of these schemes of educational reform, so far as we have been able to collect them from the manifestos of the two sections, and, without reference to a possible *arrière pensée*, to endeavour to estimate, as correctly as we are able, their real character and tendency.

Taking, first, what for distinction we may describe as the *lay* proposal, its leading idea would seem to be to remodel the existing institutions for the higher education in Ireland, on the pattern presented by the London University and the various seminaries which prepare candidates for its degrees. The adoption of the principle in its integrity would require the abolition of both the present Irish universities: on their ruins would be raised a new university, to be called the University of Dublin or of Ireland, which would be in fact simply an examining Board, under which would be ranged as strictly co-ordinate institutions the various teaching bodies of the country, including amongst these as equal members Trinity College, the Queen's Colleges, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, "The Catholic University," &c. These would send up candidates for matriculation and degrees to the central institution, where, without reference to the antecedents of their training, they would be received, examined and certificated. But this scheme, though "comprehensive, well-founded in theory, and national in aspect,"*

* "University Education in Ireland," p. 3. This pamphlet, by a distinguished member of the Queen's University Senate, which we take as the best exposition of the views we are now considering, has not been published;

it is thought advisable, from considerations of practical expediency, suggested by the opposition which it would be in the power of Trinity College to offer, to relinquish, in favour of another less perfect but more feasible. It is accordingly proposed to leave Dublin University with its College aside as refractory elements, but to throw the remaining educational institutions of the country into the crucible. The connection between the Queen's University and its Colleges would be dissolved; the University in its present character would cease to exist; and the outcome would be an examining Board, to be named the Queen's University, and a group of co-ordinate institutions, amongst which the Queen's Colleges and "The Catholic University" would rank with a host of preparatory schools now little conscious of the dignity which is intended for them. These would work together on an equal footing, engaged in the common task of preparing candidates for the matriculation and degree examinations to be held by the Central Board.

Such in outline is the scheme which has been propounded, and which enjoys, we understand, in Ireland a certain amount of favour. It is also a part of the proposal that the Senate of the University should be increased from sixteen (the present number) to thirty members,—twenty of these to be nominated by the Crown and to consist in equal numbers of Protestants and Catholics, the remaining ten to be elected by Convocation. Further, it is proposed that the appointment of Professors in the Queen's Colleges should be transferred from the Crown to a local Board, constituted on a plan, as it seems to us, equally complicated and unpromising. For the present, however, we purpose confining ourselves to the more fundamental and characteristic features of the scheme.

And in the first place, it occurs to us to ask, why, supposing it is proper to abolish one or both of the existing Irish universities, erect another in their room? According to the theory propounded, the proper function of a university is to test actual acquirement, without reference to the place or mode of acquisition. A university is thus conceived as a sort of intellectual mint to which all the pure metal

but as it has enjoyed a very large circulation, probably much larger than if it made its appearance in the ordinary way, we do not think that, in treating it as public, we violate any rule of literary etiquette which deserves to be held sacred.

of knowledge in the country is to be brought to receive the stamp which is to make it current. Well, adopting this view, is there not already the London University to perform the required office? It is not denied that it performs its office well: on what principle, then, are we required to establish a second mint for knowledge, and thus to introduce into the economy of letters double standards and measures? The writer who has advocated this plan takes the "Jury Central" of Belgium (the exact position of which in the Belgian scheme of education, by the way, he seems to us to misconceive) as the model of a national university; and he tells us that the London University is in this country the analogue of that institution. Then why not act on this analogy, and re-organize the "unharnessed" Irish seminaries under the London "Central"? It cannot be said that local convenience would require a second Irish university; for, as we have already pointed out, under the arrangement which now exists the staff of the metropolitan establishment is brought to the doors, it may be to the halls, of the Irish Colleges. Nor can we suppose—at a time when the mischief of keeping alive a distinct national sentiment is just receiving such painful illustration, when even to the Irish Lord Lieutenant everything which looks in this direction is carefully discountenanced—that an Irish "Central" will be demanded on *national* grounds. It seems to us, therefore, that the leading feature of the scheme stands condemned upon its author's own principles. The present universities of Ireland, *constituted as they now are*, may have something to say for themselves: how far this is so we shall presently examine: an Irish university constituted on the plan proposed, as a second "Central Jury," would be absolutely without a reason for its existence. Nay, there would be abundance of reasons for its non-existence; for what other effect could the creation of such a body have but to introduce between it and the university already in possession of the field a vicious competition for candidates, such as this writer himself, in the case of the medical schools, has shewn almost necessarily results in a degradation of the standard of knowledge?

But the policy of the scheme we have described is open to objections more fundamental far than this. What is the conception of education which it presents to us? Simply

that of a preparatory process for a uniform examination. For culture properly so called, for the process by which the mind is opened, liberated and rendered productive, for any results which may not be tested by categorical question and answer, the scheme we have described makes no provision : nay, there are abundant indications that these objects lie absolutely outside its author's mental horizon. It is laid down, for example, that universities should "test the man for what he knows, not where he learned it," apparently under the impression that the object of restricting University degrees to those trained in particular institutions is to create a "monopoly" in favour of the institutions, or the localities where they happen to exist. The same view is almost grotesquely brought out in another passage :

"The student of St. Patrick's College, Carlow, passes through Dublin, where the Queen's University ignores him, on his way to the London University, which admits him—surely such an absurdity cannot be permitted to continue."

We do not know whether the fact that the student of St. Patrick's College, Carlow, can now obtain his degree from London University *without* passing the site of the Queen's University, will diminish in our author's eyes the absurdity which he here discovers ; but to our minds the only absurdity in the case—and it is a very great absurdity—is the application of such tests to such subjects.

In presence of arguments of this order, it may perhaps be well to state that the end of a university system—the purpose by success or failure in which it must be justified or condemned—is not to bring aspirants to academic degrees by the shortest route before the nearest examining Board, much as criminals are hurried before the nearest Justice, but to furnish the means for the largest, freest, and most varied development of the human faculties. Now this is not to be accomplished by a system which proposes no other aim, and provides for no other result, than success at an examination, a system which converts the entire educational machinery of a country into an apparatus for encouraging and facilitating "cram." We are not amongst those who regard with anything but unmixed satisfaction the application in recent years of the method of competitive examination to the public service. Employed within certain limits, and applied with discretion, it is, we believe, an invaluable ex-

pedient in working the machinery of administration. But the method obviously, admittedly, has a tendency to engender certain well-known intellectual defects, of which the chief is the habit of loading the memory with the mere results of knowledge rapidly accumulated, and, when the pressure is passed, almost as rapidly forgotten. Nor will it be denied that the evil is one which many other modern influences powerfully contribute to foster. This being so, it would seem to be the part of wisdom so to frame our educational arrangements as to neutralize as far as possible this besetting tendency. One obvious means—we own, so far as we can see, the only effectual means—of accomplishing this object is to supplement the examination test by others; for example, by the condition that the student, before presenting himself for examination, shall have gone through certain prescribed courses of study under the guidance of the best minds which the teaching body of the time can furnish. This is what the academic or collegiate system* seeks to do, and what, with more or less success, it accomplishes; and this is the condition which the plan we are considering proposes altogether to annul. Under the notion that it is placing all localities on a par, that it is excluding the element “where” from the conditions of the acquisition of knowledge, it in fact places all methods of instruction on a par, and excludes from the conditions required as evidence of knowledge that one which forms the chief and almost the only security for its thoroughness. Far from providing checks against the prevailing intellectual vice of the time, it makes a clean sweep of such inadequate securities as now exist, and even invites the advances of the enemy by opening to his ambition a new and boundless field.

But perhaps we shall be told that these consequences are not involved in the proposed scheme. The plan—so we can imagine an advocate might put the argument—far from favouring any scheme of instruction in particular, is essentially neutral as regards all, and neither seeks, on the one hand, to discourage the system of collegiate training, nor,

* We may explain here, to avoid misapprehension, that by the “collegiate system,” we merely mean instruction carried out through regular attendance on courses of lectures delivered in institutions established for the purpose of *general* mental cultivation. This necessarily implies residence near a college, but not necessarily *mensal* residence.

on the other, to promote private teaching. People under the new *régime*, it may be said, might continue, if they thought proper, to send their sons to colleges as now; and no doubt (such a reasoner might add), if the advantages of this course are as great as is pretended, this is what would happen. The essence of the scheme, in short, it might be urged, is not protection or favour, but freedom—the extension into the field of knowledge of that stimulus to effort and improvement which healthy competition supplies—in a word, “free trade in education.”

But this, however plausible, is, in reality, wholly irrelevant to the issue which we have raised. Our objection to the proposed scheme is, not that it applies the examination test unfairly, but that *it applies no other test*. If the condition of passing an examination be the only one required by a university for obtaining its degrees, it is plain that the qualities of education which an examination is competent to elicit are the only ones which such a university will tend to develop. The Central Board of Examination would, no doubt, be perfectly impartial as between the various systems of which the results would be submitted to it; but if its tests are only fitted for the discovery of merit of a certain kind, it could not but favour the systems which were most efficacious in producing that sort of merit. But we need not on this point rely altogether on speculative considerations. We have already had tolerably large experience of the working of such a system in the examinations for the Indian Civil Service. These examinations are probably conducted in a manner as well fitted to defeat “cram” as in the nature of the case is possible; and what is the lesson which the experiment teaches? We believe it is this, that in such a contest the places of education in which collegiate training is enforced are not competent to hold their ground against the competition of the professional “coach.” Unfortunately it is not possible to exhibit the results of the experiment in statistical form; as it is the custom of the Civil Service Commissioners to ignore in their returns the places of special instruction, in which the majority of the candidates spend two or three years before presenting themselves for examination. The effect of this, of course, is that the work of the professional trainers is concealed; the universities and schools obtaining credit largely for successes

which are in fact due to other means of instruction. The working of the system, therefore, as regards the point in hand, cannot be exhibited statistically. We will, however, quote the opinion of a friend who, with the advantage of some experience as an examiner, has watched the experiment. "My own opinion," he writes, "is that university candidates are declining and must decline in numbers; the Indian Civil Service examinations are making a sort of university themselves. A lad of 16 or 17 goes to a 'coach,' and at the end of a year goes in to the examination to see what it is like; he thus feels his way, ascertains his weak points, and has some means of judging whether he may be successful in a second or third venture; and it constantly happens that a selected candidate has been up once, if not twice, before. The Civil Service Halls, Institutes and what not, are thus in the same relation to the Indian Civil Service examination that the affiliated Colleges of London University are to it. It is quite impossible that the older Universities can compete with this system." Such, in the opinion of careful observers, is the tendency of competitive examination in relation to collegiate training in the most important instance in which it has yet been tried; and this may enable us to form an idea of what would be the result of remodelling our entire university system on the plan of the Civil Service Commission, which is in effect the reform now proposed. It could only, as it seems to us, discourage, and ultimately lead to the abandonment altogether in the higher education of systematic training in colleges,—the one effectual safeguard which we possess against the gravest intellectual danger of the time. The older universities might, under such a *régime*, for a time hold their ground: their *prestige* would not at once perish. But for places like the Irish Queen's Colleges,—institutions of yesterday—institutions which, far from being aided by *prestige*, have had to struggle against a weight of disingenuous misrepresentation and carefully fostered odium,—the result of such a policy could only be quick destruction.*

* We are inclined, on consideration, to think that it would prove even more certainly the destruction of "The Catholic University." Over and above the causes indicated, which would affect this institution (as it also enforces the collegiate principle) equally with the Queen's Colleges, there would be the desire to escape ecclesiastical dictation. To the plea of poverty with which the

Nor would the mischief of this movement be confined to its intellectual consequences. With the collegiate system would also be lost advantages of a moral and social kind, scarcely, if at all, less important than its more direct and palpable benefits,—those manifold helps to the formation of character which arise from bringing young men together at the most impressionable period of life, and placing them under the influence of minds not unsympathetic with theirs, while instructed and mature. In the friendly intimacies and honourable rivalries of those three or four years, what opportunities occur for lessons in the practical ethics of life!—lessons at once in modesty and self-respect, laid silently to heart as the student measures himself against his fellows, and ascertains his true mental stature—lessons in candour and toleration as he discovers how most questions have two sides, on either of which good and earnest men are found to range themselves—lessons in the practical value and skilful handling of the truths learned in the lecture-room, afforded by conversation with his companions and by the opportunities of the debating club;—lastly, lessons in self-reliance, simplicity and manliness of character, inhaled with the moral atmosphere of a place in which the only distinctions known are those which in the actual arena have made their pretensions good.

These are advantages incidental to the Collegiate system wherever it is established; but for a country like Ireland, long torn with religious dissensions, where for centuries Protestants and Catholics educated in opposite camps have learned to regard each other almost as natural enemies, the system, carried out as it is in the Queen's Colleges, has manifestly a special adaptation. What can be better fitted to qualify the virus of bigotry and engender feelings of mutual consideration and respect, what better preparation for the duties of citizenship in a country of mixed religious faith can be imagined, than a system of education which furnishes to the youths of all religious denominations neutral ground on which they may meet and cultivate in common, without reference to the causes which divide them, those pursuits in which they have a common interest? It is a noteworthy

recommendation of the priesthood to parents to send their sons to "The Catholic University" could easily be met, there would be no effective reply. Hence, no doubt, the strenuous repudiation by the clerical party of this lay scheme.

fact, and one for which, let us observe in passing, the authorities in those institutions deserve some little credit, that throughout the fifteen years of their existence, with one single and transient exception,* not an instance in any of the Colleges has occurred of dissension due to religious differences. And this result has been attained, while religious controversy has been raging with the utmost fury all around, and while propagandist societies—in the case of one of the colleges at least, and that one in which Catholics and Protestants meet in almost exactly equal numbers—have been pushing their operations almost at the College doors. Yet, in spite of these provocatives to discord, Catholics and Protestants have left those institutions, and are leaving them year by year, having there formed friendships which will last with their lives.† These are achievements to which the academic system, as carried out in Ireland through the

* On one occasion some students, at a visitation of Belfast College, raised “the Kentish fire.” The incident has, we believe, been much exaggerated; at all events, it was unique. There was a fine illustration of the habitual spirit of the place at a recent very numerous meeting of the graduates to protest against the proposed changes in the University. Each of the speakers referred to the advantage he had derived from mixing with men of different creeds, but the tone of the remarks, and the patient attention with which the assembly listened to a solitary dissident, were better evidence of their tolerance than any direct testimony.

† We beg the reader to contrast these results with the theory of education inculcated in the following passage from a pamphlet which has just appeared, expressing the views of the clerical party:—

“You say young men of different religions mixed together, refrain, even from a motive of pride for their own religion, from discourses against religion or morality: that is to say, Catholic youths—for it is chiefly with regard to them that we are discussing what educational system is the best—Catholic youths find the society of Protestant, of irreligious—am I to add, of immoral?—youths, provided they are not Catholics, less likely to lead to irreligious or corrupt conversation, than the society of young men who have the happiness of professing the true faith. I suppose, you admit, that ‘as there is but one God and one baptism, there is but one true faith,’ and that they who profess it are, *ceteris paribus*, better Christians and better men than they who do not. Well, then, association with those who, *ceteris paribus*, are better Christians and better men, is more corrupting than association with others, who, through God’s inscrutable judgment, are in the darkness of error! In other words, good companions are no longer good companions; evil company is no longer the occasion of evil, but of greater virtues. This is not the lesson which the experience of all time teaches. From it we learn that of all the agencies for the corruption of youth, evil company is perhaps the worst,” &c. (“NOTES on ‘University Education in Ireland,’” by U. R.)

What hopeful promise for future peace and progress in Ireland when the principle maintained in this passage is taken as the basis of its educational system, and the youths of each religious denomination are warned to shun those of the others as they would shun “evil company”!

Queen's Colleges, may point with pride ; and they are such as, it seems to us, no wise Government would lightly imperil or willingly let die.*

The writer, indeed, whose scheme of university reform we have been criticising, is, as one would expect, sceptical of these advantages. He tells us : "It is held that the intimacies and associations thus formed may be, and indeed often are, as much for evil as for good, when young men or boys are sent for three years away from guardians and parents. Studious and well-disposed young men do not obtrude their advice or example on their companions ; the idle and ill-disposed are always obtrusive, and their persuasions and example often exercise a most injurious influence over their companions." Now we have no hesitation in repudiating this representation, which we can scarcely believe to be the reflex of an actual experience, as a fair account of the influences evolved amid the intercourse of undergraduate life. At least, speaking from our own experience, self-distrust and morbid reserve are not the characteristics which we remember to have observed in the men who took the highest places in the honour lists and the foremost parts in the debating club. Of course, where many youths congregate, there will be "studious and well-disposed young men" whose virtue will seek the shade, and "idle and ill-disposed" who will thrust themselves into the foreground ; but these, we submit, are not the prevailing types. Self-assertion, rather than morbid shyness, is the side on which we venture to think youthful merit, intellectual and moral, is apt to err ; and it would speak little indeed for the administrative adroitness of those who bear rule in collegiate circles, if this natural proneness of the best minds under their authority to impress themselves on all who come within their range, were not turned to account in

* One objection to the enforcement of residence in the Queen's Colleges might be, and indeed has been, urged with much apparent force—that it is unsuited to a poor population. So serious did this consideration seem to the Commissioners who reported on the state of Trinity College in 1852, that, while expressing in the strongest terms the value they attached to academic residence, they yet declined to recommend that it should be made indispensable. Fortunately, the advocates of the collegiate system are now enabled to meet this reasonable apprehension with the most satisfactory of answers—the fact of success. In spite of the rule of residence, the Queen's Colleges, as has been seen, have attracted to their halls quite as large a proportion of the several classes as the social circumstances of the country give warrant for expecting.

generating a public opinion favourable to virtue and honourable distinction. As a matter of fact, we believe that this result is generally attained. In the great academic bodies of the country, undergraduate opinion is, we venture to say, in the main healthy and sound. If it is not invariably so, the exceptional result is, doubtless, due to an exceptional cause ; to something, we should conjecture, radically wrong in the constitution of the bodies which yield the noxious fruits. The fact, if it be one, ought not to be blinked ; but its proper moral is, not the abolition of the academic system in education, but the reformation of the peccant institutions.

As we have ventured to impugn the theory of university reform advanced in the proposal we have been examining, it may perhaps be expected that we should indicate, in lieu of the principle we have combated, what in our opinion is the sound ideal of a university system. Reverting, then, to what we said a few pages back, that the true end of universities is to provide means for the largest and freest development in all directions of the national mind, and remembering that culture implies systematic training, and that distinct forms of culture imply distinct and independent institutions, a perfect system for the higher education would, in our opinion, be one in which university degrees should represent, not a mere quantum of uniform attainment, but, along with knowledge, types of culture ; and in which the number of distinct universities should correspond with the number of distinct types of culture which mental movement in the country might assume. Of course it would be necessary in practice to restrict the application of this principle to those forms of mental movement which were sufficiently characteristic, and at the same time the expression of the intellectual condition of a sufficiently large number of persons, to make the establishment of independent institutions for their promotion worth the while. And it would also be necessary, in order to the complete freedom of education,—inasmuch as there are in all communities persons who, whether from narrowness of means, mental idiosyncrasy, or from other causes, decline to take part in the collegiate system through which alone types of culture can be generated and maintained—that the universities, constituted on the plan indicated of representing culture, should be supplemented by a university con-

stituted upon that of representing attainment merely ; or, to state our meaning in concrete language, that, in addition to universities of the Oxford, Cambridge and Dublin type, there should be a university also of the London type. There is no reason that persons, unable or unwilling to take part in the collegiate system, on giving proof that they have acquired a due amount of knowledge, should not be admitted to the intellectual rank of university-educated men ; and the natural and obvious means of effecting this object would be through a university in which collegiate training was not imperative. Such a system, it seems to us, would realize the conditions requisite at once for the freedom and the solidity of mental progress ; and in fact it is a system of this kind at which in the natural course of things—practice in this instance as in others preceding theory—we have arrived in this country. Under the impulse of particular motives, with slight regard to general views, the founders of our universities, whether private individuals or governments, have traced out an organization of the higher learning, which, in its actual condition, does not differ materially from that which would have been realized if the principles we have indicated had been deliberately followed. We have not one, but many universities, which in the main represent specific and distinct intellectual results. The culture of Oxford is not the culture of Cambridge ; and both are distinct, on the one hand, from the culture of Scotland, on the other, from that represented by Trinity College, Dublin. To these types of culture we can now add that imparted in the Queen's University and its Colleges, which we venture to assert is not less specific and distinct than any of the better-known forms. It is true we cannot, in the case of Colleges fifteen years old, justify this language by an appeal to experience. But if the time and the object of the establishment of the Queen's Colleges be considered—the time, when the modern languages and the physical sciences had just begun to attract that attention as instruments of education which has of late been so liberally accorded them ; the object, to educate the youths of different religious denominations on equal terms in common—the candid will, we think, acknowledge that a system of education conducted on a plan so different from any which has been tried elsewhere, and which drew its adherents from classes of society

not hitherto reached by the higher education, is not unlikely to yield intellectual fruits equally characteristic and distinct. The system provides for wants not hitherto supplied, and provides for them in a way fitted to generate and preserve a type of culture suited to the circumstances of the country and to the character of the people ; and herein consists its justification on the principles we have set forth. But to return to our immediate point—in the main, we say, the several universities of Great Britain and Ireland justify their separate existence by representing distinct forms of culture ; while over and above the universities representing culture, there is the University of London representing attainment merely, wherever or however acquired, adapted, therefore, to meet the wants of all who are unable to find a place in the more normal institutions. Now if these views be sound, it follows that the principle and entire scope of the scheme of centralization now advocated for the higher education in Ireland are essentially a mistake. The scheme starts with a false ideal ; it moves in a wrong direction ; and, if carried into practice, it must inevitably issue in pernicious results. What is wanted in our university system is not revolution and re-organization, but remedial legislation, directed to the correction of inequalities and minor abuses which have come down to us from ages of bigotry, and embracing no doubt also the adaptation of its courses and methods to the advancing conditions of human knowledge.

And from the principles just laid down we may deduce one or two more conclusions, not irrelevant to the question in hand. We may perceive in them, for example, a new reason, in addition to that already adduced, in favour of maintaining the collegiate system in university education. The connection of universities with particular colleges, far from being the factitious and obstructive incident which it has been represented—a hindrance to be got rid of by all means—is, we may now see, in truth an essential condition to their fulfilment of the main purpose for which they exist ; since it is manifestly only by maintaining this connection that degrees can be what they mainly ought to be—the representatives or emblems of culture. And again those principles furnish the reply to another question, of which, so far as we know, no intelligible solution has yet

been given—the question under what circumstances and within what limits the competition between universities or other bodies granting degrees is productive of good. Every one recognizes the fact that in some instances such competition is beneficial, in others injurious ; but we are not aware that any one has furnished an explanation of these apparently conflicting phenomena. We are now, however, in a position to do so. Competition will be useful among such bodies, so long as their number is confined within the limits indicated by the principles laid down ; that is to say, so long as they represent distinct types of culture, or, as we may otherwise state it, so long as they render distinct services to the community ; and it becomes mischievous the moment this line is passed. It will not be difficult to sustain this position by examples.

Thus a notable instance of the mischief caused by competition among bodies granting degrees is furnished by the medical schools of the United Kingdom. There are, we believe, altogether in the country some nineteen independent schools and colleges granting degrees in medicine and surgery. Of these the greater number perform identical functions, and as a consequence address themselves to the same classes of the population ; their constituency being one and the same, their competition inevitably takes a commercial turn, and they seek to recommend themselves to their “customers” by cheapening the commodity in which they deal. The result is that which is deplored by every eminent member of the profession*—a general deterioration of the standard of medical knowledge. And such inevitably would be the tendency of the proposal which has been advanced of establishing in Dublin a second university on the London University plan. Such a university could only render services already adequately rendered by the University of London. The two bodies would stand to each other in precisely the same relation as the competing medical schools, and we cannot doubt with the same result. Now take an example of competition of another kind amongst degree-granting bodies—the competition of Oxford with

* Amongst others we may cite the author of the scheme we are considering. In reference to the evils in question, he observes : “They have arisen from the competition among the nineteen licensing Universities and Colleges for the profits arising from candidates and pupils.”—P. 21.

Cambridge, and of both with the University of London ; and an instance more pertinent to our purpose still—the competition between Trinity College, Dublin, and the Queen's University and its Colleges. With regard to the former, it will not, we imagine, be denied that the effects of the competition, so far as it is felt, are altogether salutary ; and as regards the Irish universities, we can from personal knowledge affirm that this has been eminently the case. Not only has their mutual rivalry heightened the *esprit de corps* of each, and stimulated the ardour of scientific and literary pursuit, but it has also borne fruit in substantial measures of great practical utility. And why is this ? Manifestly because in all these cases the degrees of the universities represent something specific and distinct, and, because in virtue of this fact, they address themselves in the main to distinct classes in the community. The competition under these circumstances has no tendency to degenerate into a process of underbidding, but rather becomes a race for distinction. The graduates of the several universities meet in the lists of life—in the professions, in politics, in literature, in society : they are known as Oxford, as Cambridge, as Dublin, and as Queen's University, men : the world takes note of the connection between the achievement and the preparation ; and the university from which each has issued gains or loses *prestige*. Such has been the working of competition in this country under legitimate conditions. We borrow the following account of the operation of the same principle in Germany from Major O'Reilly's able and instructive, though one-sided and prejudiced, essay :

“The existing government of Prussia retains the entire direction of education—of the village school, the college, and the university. But with regard to their internal organization and the regulation of their studies, the Prussian Universities differ wholly from the French ; instead of one University organized by fixed and uniform rules, there exist six, subject indeed to the Minister of Public Instruction, but having each their own independence, their own organization and administration, and, so to speak, their separate life. Each is a corporation, has jurisdiction over its own students ; has its own senate and its own faculties ; determines its own courses of study, its own examinations, and grants its own degrees. Such is the Prussian system ; of which the chief characteristics are the great freedom

left to the Universities under the nominal control of the government, and the freedom of emulation in teaching.* As Mr. Loomans says, 'The foundation of the Prussian organization is the *esprit de corps* which keeps up the emulation between the different Universities; and the competition which keeps up the standard in each. To form an idea of the emulation, we should rather call it the rivalry, which exists between the German Universities, one must be in the midst of that German society so occupied with the interests of science. The Universities have acquired a consideration and an influence which are surprising. Not only are they at the head of education, but they rule all scientific and literary movement. This situation is the principal cause of their prosperity; placed, as it were, under the eyes of the entire nation, they naturally seek to conciliate the sympathies of all.'

This is healthy, invigorating, elevating rivalry, rivalry, too, identical in principle with that which is now in this country actually yielding similar fruits, similar in kind if still inferior in amount and quality; and it is rivalry of this kind which it is now proposed to abolish in Ireland in favour of a rivalry between two central institutions "open to all comers," performing precisely the same functions and addressing themselves necessarily to precisely the same classes of the population; in favour of a rivalry which, judging from experience, could only issue in the double evil of encouraging "cram" and degrading the standard of knowledge.

So far as to the lay scheme of Irish university reform. Turning now to the demand of the clerical party, it will be

* We may point out in passing the essential similarity in several fundamental points between the Prussian University system, highly applauded by Major O'Reilly, and that of the Queen's Colleges, for which he has only terms of reprobation. A more apt characterization could not be given of the organization of the latter institutions than in the words quoted above—"Great freedom, under the nominal control of the Government." Thus the governing bodies in the Colleges are Councils consisting of the Presidents and Professors representing the several Faculties; and these are vested with very considerable powers, having full authority to prescribe the courses, arrange the lectures of the Professors, settle all questions connected with the internal management of the Colleges, and in general, in the words of the Charter, "not being in any way under the jurisdiction or control of the University Senate further than as regards the regulations for qualification for the several degrees." We desire especially to call attention to the following point. "The Professors" [in the Prussian Universities], says Major O'Reilly, "are named by the King on the proposition by the Faculties of a list of three." We venture to affirm that the plan adopted in the Queen's Colleges does not in effect differ from this.

remembered that originally this was for a charter for "The Catholic University." Let us here frankly express our opinion that we see nothing in such a demand on the face of it inadmissible. On the contrary we freely concede that it is for those who resist such a claim to make out grounds for their resistance. It signifies in our view nothing that the ideas of those who founded "The Catholic University" on "the eternal principles" first evolved in the dark ages may have little in common with prevailing modes of thought in this country ; if those ideas are in fact the ideas of a section of the Irish people, we, for our parts, see no reason that every facility should not be afforded—a charter of incorporation if that be desired—in order that such separatists from the thought and feeling of the age should, *so far as they are themselves concerned*, carry into effect their educational designs. On the assumption, therefore, that the demand for a charter for "The Catholic University" means simply a demand, on the part of persons holding certain peculiar views, to be placed on an equality, as regards State recognition, with the rest of the community, our principles would certainly lead us to the conclusion that such a claim ought to be conceded.

But, in truth, to discuss the question now before the public as if it were confined within such dimensions as these, would be to ignore all the most important elements of the case, and in fact to beat the air. The leaders of the ultramontane party have never disguised the fact that their object in this movement has been to supplant, not to supplement—to carry over the Roman Catholic population as a whole from the institutions which they now frequent to others which it is their purpose to establish, not merely to provide an exceptional institution for some exceptionally constituted persons. That this is their aim is implied in the whole course of their procedure, from the sitting of the Synod of Thurles down to the publication of Dr. Cullen's latest pastoral, in the name and pretensions of their university, and in all the circumstances of its origin, above all, in the system of spiritual terrorism put in force against those who have dared to avail themselves of the mixed schools and colleges of the country. The necessity of resorting to such courses—of resorting to them, not occasionally, but incessantly and on system, of year after year raising the pitch of denuncia-

tion till it has culminated in threats of exclusion from the sacraments and other ordinances of the Church—a measure, be it remembered, equivalent in Roman Catholic estimation to exclusion from salvation—shews more conclusively even than the statistics which in a former part of this article we adduced, that the system of education against which such expedients are employed is as agreeable to the people of the country as it is obnoxious to those who have recourse to such measures of attack. No doubt those who have brought forward this cause in Parliament have taken care not to present it in this form. Parliament hears only of “the Irish people” as chafing against the grievance of liberal institutions and hungering for a mediæval university; the bishops, if they are brought upon the scene, only appearing as intercessors in behalf of their much-enduring flocks. But even as thus stated, the argument at least implies that those who urge this demand contemplate nothing less than the overthrow of the institutions to which the “Irish people” now resort. To be sure, it is denied by these advocates that the Irish people *do* resort to them, but we have already furnished the reader with the means of judging of the value of such denials.

Such, then, and not a mere demand for freedom of educational development for a dissentient section, is the real scope and aim of the question now before the public. Started indeed and still upheld by a mere section, its purpose is to deal with the intellectual interests of the whole Irish people. A fraction of the community—the ultramontane bishops of Ireland—seek a place for their exotic institution in the national system of the country, not for the legitimate purpose of offering its services to those who have need of and desire them, but, if not avowedly, at all events by necessary implication from their acts, in order that they may thus obtain a vantage-ground from which with more effect to coerce* into the adoption of their

* We use the term “coerce” advisedly. The following specimen—it occurred quite recently and has been pretty generally commented on by the press—of the mode of conduct pursued will enable the reader to say whether we do so justifiably. The transaction in question was not connected with the particular subject of this essay; but the principles of conduct laid down and acted on are obviously applicable to that and all like cases.

Some time ago some Roman Catholic gentlemen in Belfast formed themselves into a Society for the cultivation of science and literature, under the title of

scheme the entire Roman Catholic community ; in order that—their fulminations and threats having fallen short of their object—they may reinforce terror by attraction, and bring such honour and emolument as the State can confer to second their ineffectual anathemas.

We confess we are wholly unable to see that this country is called upon by any principle of freedom to yield to a demand of this sort. Tyranny is not the less tyranny when its seat is in the human soul, and when it seeks its ends by threats of torture to be inflicted hereafter instead of now ; and though it may be true that in this form it eludes the grasp of human legislation, though it may not be pos-

“The Belfast Catholic Institute.” From causes which we need not enter into here, the Society flourished financially, and in course of time a question arose as to the disposition of some surplus funds. The majority of the Directory had certain views upon this subject ; Doctor Dorrian, the Coadjutor Bishop of the diocese, had others. The Bishop, in fact, desired to apply the disposable funds to ecclesiastical purposes, and moved a resolution to this effect, which the majority of the Directory negatived. The Bishop remonstrated, at first with the Directory, afterwards with the shareholders individually ; but the Society stood firm. Whereupon the Bishop addressed to each member of the Society a circular letter, in which he made the following announcement :

“The following, as conditions of recommendation and approval, I cannot forego. They are essential to my sanction being given to this or any new company into which the Institute may be transformed, as the above condemned propositions prove :

- “1—*The approval by the Bishop of such Articles of Association as he shall judge satisfactory, and their adoption as the basis of any new company to be formed.*
- “2—*The same right, on the part of the Bishop, of approving the rules of management of Lecture-hall, Library and News-room.*
- “3—*A veto by the Bishop on any member acting on the Directory, whose morals, religious principles and habits of life, the Bishop may object to.*
- “4—*The approval by the Bishop, or one appointed by him, of all books and newspapers to be admitted for reading into News-room or Library ; and the like approval of any lecturer to be invited to lecture for the members.*

“If these conditions be not made the basis of the Institute, I wish to give fair notice that, by whatsoever name the new association he called—and to change the name, if such he in contemplation, is not a very hopeful sign—I SHALL CONSIDER IT MY DUTY, FOR THE PROTECTION OF MY PEOPLE, TO DEBAR FROM SACRAMENTS ALL AND EVERY ONE WHO MAY BECOME A MEMBER, OR AID IN ITS CONSTRUCTION—these securities for its proper management not being first provided.”

It seems to us that this is “coercion” as truly as if the menace had been of direct physical chastisement ; and this, it will be observed, is not an isolated instance, but a specimen of a system of conduct. Another example, to which we have already referred, occurred within the present year in the Bishop of Clonfert’s pastoral denouncing the Queen’s Colleges, and, were there any need, we could fill our pages with similar brutal episodes.

sible to bind the subtle essence of spiritual terrorism without at the same time endangering the play of legitimate moral influence—though, therefore, intolerance itself when it assumes this garb must needs be tolerated—at least there seems no reason that a liberal State should play into its hands, and make itself by deliberate action the accomplice of its designs. Many unworthy acts have been committed in the name of Liberty ; but we question if the sacred word was ever more audaciously prostituted than when invoked by ultramontane bishops against the system of education established by Sir Robert Peel.

The question, however, is no longer respecting a distinct Charter, but of affiliation to the Queen's University : it remains to consider how this modification affects the considerations we have just urged. Affiliation may, of course, mean very little or a great deal, according to the terms by which the relation is determined. As we have already said, the Government has not yet made public its plan ; but the *parti prêtre*, though they have on the whole kept their counsel well, have not been altogether silent. We have just had the advantage of reading a pamphlet which, though appearing anonymously, we have reason to believe proceeds from a source than which none is more likely to be well informed on the subject in hand.* It is in the form of a reply to the lay proposal to which we have devoted so large a portion of this paper. That proposal the writer of the pamphlet repudiates with unmeasured scorn, and, in doing so, takes occasion to lay down certain negative conditions as well as certain principles of a positive kind, which, in his view, must govern the arrangement. Amongst other significant passages, we find the following :

“Permit me to say” (the writer is addressing himself to the author of the lay scheme) “that I think you have fallen into two or three mistakes : first, in supposing that the bishops would for an instant entertain the thought of affiliating their University to the Queen's University as at present constituted : secondly, in thinking that the Catholic University would ever

* This production, entitled “Notes on ‘University Education in Ireland,’” is announced as “printed for *private* circulation *only* ;” but as it is unquestionably intended to influence *public* opinion on a matter of the gravest *public* importance, we do not feel ourselves bound to connive at what we must regard as an unfair artifice for evading the ordinary liability to legitimate criticism, which is the proper condition attaching to such attempts in a free country.

be changed by them into a 'Queen's College,' or into an institution at all like a Queen's College: thirdly, in taking for granted that the Catholic University and its founders and guardians, the bishops, would surrender all 'pretensions' to its present title and to its University privileges derived from the Pope and admitted by all Catholics, although not recognized by the State. Nay more, I believe you are wrong in thinking that any Government, which deserves the name of 'Liberal,' would offer the Catholic Bishops of Ireland the insult of asking them to do any one of the three things I have mentioned. Solely with respect to the third, the bishops might waive the question of the recognition by the State of the style, title and University privileges of the Catholic University. But now to answer your question: Where is the line to be drawn in a system of affiliation?—I answer: *It is to be drawn so as to secure for the Catholic University the position she is entitled to, at the head of Catholic Education in Ireland.* (The italics are the author's.) Less than this the Sovereign Pontiff will not sanction; and it was at his suggestion the University was first established. With less than this the Bishops of Ireland will not be satisfied, and it was they who founded the University, and who by their continued and determined opposition to dangerous systems of education have brought this question to its present stage; less than this our Catholic people will not accept, and they have shewn themselves able and determined to discriminate between godless and Catholic education."

The writer does not state what constitution of the Queen's University would lead the bishops to "entertain the thought" of affiliation; but we infer from the whole passage that they would not accept the modification suggested by the lay reformer. That suggestion, it will be remembered, is that the Senate should consist of thirty members, of which twenty (equally divided between Protestants and Catholics) should be nominated by the Crown, and the remaining ten elected by Convocation; and this suggestion, it seems, is inadmissible. Here then, at least, we have a negative *datum*. A further clue to their requirements on this point we may find in the composition of another body in which the bishops *do* place confidence. The governing committee of "The Catholic University"—we mean the present body—is composed, as we have already stated, of twenty-four members, of which eight are bishops, eight priests, and eight laymen, the last, we believe, the nominees of the Episcopate. Keeping this in view, and remembering that this institution

has been put forward as in all things a model, it will argue singular moderation if, in the constitution of the Senate of the new University, the same party is satisfied with simple preponderance, symbolized, say, by the presence on the Board of some leading members of the Episcopate. And this is the body that is to preside over and regulate the only university education to be permitted to Catholics in Ireland!

Then "The Catholic University" College is to be "at the head of Catholic education in Ireland," or, as the condition is more clearly expounded in another passage, "although there may be many halls, that is to say, colleges or schools, where Catholic youth can study, still there should be but one University College, and it should have the right to mould all according to its own idea." On this principle, it seems, "the line is to be drawn" in the system of affiliation, and such is to be the first practical exemplification of "freedom of university education" for Catholics.

We must call attention to one passage more :

"Again, in the system you [the lay reformer] propose, why, I ask, are the colleges to be still maintained? If the University does not need its special colleges, why is this great expense to be annually incurred? The answer is obvious. Some endowed colleges would be an anomaly, unless our rulers wish to maintain the system of State education apart from religion, on whose principle these colleges were founded, and to give no countenance to the Catholic University, which was established for the maintenance of the contrary principle. But I would beg you to remember, that such an arrangement will not meet the views of the bishops, priests, and Catholic people of Ireland; and it was precisely in order to meet their views, that the present educational movement was set on foot."

We cannot say what reply the lay reformer would give to these questions; but our answer would be, that the Queen's Colleges are to be maintained because they are based on equality and justice; because they represent the ideas of the nineteenth century, not those of the thirteenth; because they have proved themselves by success suited to the requirements and tastes of the people for whom they were designed—in a word, because they are *national* colleges; and, on the other hand, that "The Catholic University" is undeserving of support, because, in spite of its pretensions, it is sectarian and not "Catholic;" because it

is out of relation with the ideas and wants of the time, and has given no evidence of being acceptable to any considerable section of Roman Catholics outside the episcopal order ; because, in short, such a step would be retrograde and fatal to the best interests of Ireland ; and for the rest, we would remind the writer of what he and others who advance claims of this kind seem to have become wholly oblivious, that there is now a College at Maynooth in possession of the handsome endowment of £26,000 annually, established for the special and exclusive benefit of the Roman Catholic priesthood ; this sum, we may observe in passing, being larger than that assigned to the Queen's University and its Colleges—institutions performing, to borrow the language of the *Times*, “truly national service.”

But it is idle to criticise further. If there be any value in the remarks we have made on the proposition for a distinct Charter, they are obviously applicable with augmented force to this scheme. This is not a plan for affiliating the “Catholic University” College to the Queen's University : rather it is a plan for reconstructing the system of the Queen's University on the pattern of the “Catholic University” College. The “compromise” when examined turns out to be *the* original demand so shaped as to comprise an ulterior over and above the original object. *This* contemplated the establishment of a “Catholic University,” but left the Queen's University in its present position. *That* would equally establish a “Catholic University ;” but would do so on the ruins of its rival.

To conclude. We know not how far the Government may have committed itself in concession to this party ; but it seems unquestionable that to some extent it has done so. A pledge given on the eve of a general election can scarcely, after the price has been paid, be recalled with honour. But the pledge was given by the Government, not by the Liberal party or the English people ; and we have yet to see how far the country is prepared to sacrifice a great and successful policy to the exigencies of a party struggle. But should it prove that the intellectual interests of the Irish people are only thought deserving of regard as they may be turned to account in weighting the scales of an English party, we trust at least we are not too sanguine in hoping that a greater sacrifice will not be made than the due adjustment

of the political balance imperatively requires. If "something must be done," let us hope that it will be done in a manner as little mischievous as possible. If "mixed education" as a principle must be given up, let us at least save the collegiate system, and with it as far as possible accomplished results. If a mediæval University must be recognized, let us at least maintain in its integrity the single University in Ireland which represents the ideas of the nineteenth century. The concession of the original demand of the Episcopate would at least leave a rival in the field ; and it is not absolutely certain, in spite of the thunders of the Vatican and the more incessant and more telling cannonade maintained from Irish altars, that this rival might not yet hold its own.

dantly evident that its tendency would be powerfully the reverse. Just consider for a moment what its operation would be. At present, so far as there is any rivalry between the Queen's and the London University, it is a rivalry in reputation, and therefore essentially a healthy one. The idea of underbidding each other for students never enters into the heads of the authorities on either side; for, as at present constituted, they meet distinct educational needs. But assimilate them; and, by the law of their nature, a competition for students will at once set in. The position of the London University at present may be sufficiently assured to render it superior to such a policy; but the Queen's University would certainly endeavour to attract to itself those Irish students who now get their degrees from what would then be its rival; and what means so obvious for this purpose as to lower the cost of the commodity, that is to say, to render the acquisition of a degree somewhat easier? The new competition would thus at once result in a depression of the standard of education. This can scarcely be regarded as matter of speculation: the experiment has been already tried in our medical schools; with what result let Sir Dominic Corrigan say.

But the depression of the standard under the new system would be determined by causes still more decisive. The prospect of obtaining a degree on the terms of passing one or two examinations would lead numbers to prefer this method to the more arduous and expensive one of spending three years in going through regular courses of instruction in the Queen's Colleges. Now, all who have had any acquaintance with the working of the Queen's Colleges know the wretched state of preparation in which, owing to the want of good intermediate schools in the country, the great majority of the candidates for matriculation now present themselves. The effect of this has been to depress the standard of requirement at matriculation, in spite of the anxiety of the college authorities to prevent this result, for in practice it is impossible to reject candidates in the wholesale fashion which would be necessary if none but the qualified were admitted. Still, while the collegiate system is enforced, the practical evils are not of a serious kind. The chief sufferers are the professors, on whom

falls, in addition to their proper duties, the work which ought to have been performed by the schoolmaster. The work, however, is done ; and the students are brought at the end of three years to a respectable state of proficiency, as their success in the various open examinations of the country shows. But suppose the Government scheme to be carried, and a collegiate course no longer indispensable, and what will be the result ? A large number of those who now go to the colleges will pass direct from the schools to the new Queen's University ; year after year a crowd of utterly unqualified candidates will present themselves for degrees ; and does any one suppose that the Examining Board in Dublin will reject these by the scores, or perhaps by the hundreds, who must be rejected if the present standard of attainment is to be maintained ? For my part, I hesitate to give my countrymen credit for such stoical virtue. The case of the London University is not in any way parallel. In the first place, the state of intermediate education in England is, as compared at least with its state in Ireland, at a high pitch. Secondly, it would be vain to expect that we should have in Dublin such a governing body, more especially if it be constituted in conformity with the principle indicated by Sir George Grey, as the Senate of the London University now presents. And, lastly, if the attempt were made to keep the Dublin standard up to the London level, competition would effectually compel a reduction.

It will, perhaps, be said that the new system would operate beneficially on the intermediate schools, through the competition it would open for them in the new Queen's University, in the same way as in England the examinations for "Associates in Arts," conducted under the English universities, are benefiting the English schools. I do not know how far the latter experiment can really be considered a success ; but, assuming that some benefit would accrue to the intermediate schools in Ireland in this way, the result would only be realized so far as candidates for degrees passed at once from the schools to the university,—that is to say, so far as training in the intermediate schools was substituted for training in the Queen's Colleges. If any one supposes that this would be a gain for education in

Ireland, I can only say, his notions of the character of the instruction given in the schools and in the Queen's Colleges have been derived from other sources than mine. As for the free-trade maxims with which some people think they can solve all educational problems, I need scarcely say that they are simply inapplicable. If they are not, State education itself is a blunder, and the question we should have to discuss is not the reconstruction of the Queen's University, but its abolition.

Such, it seems to me, would be the tendency of the proposed scheme, even without taking account of the inevitable accessory—the introduction into the governing body of men who would sit there as the representatives of a religious party. Formally, no doubt, the proposition of the Government will be for the admission of a certain number of Catholics on the Senate; and Parliament will be asked why Catholics should not have a place in the government of an institution in which Catholics have so large an interest? But this way of talking is, in truth, the sheerest hypocrisy. No one—at least, no liberal politician—objects to a Catholic, as such, taking his seat on the Senate. At the present time the Senate contains five Catholics.* If that be not a sufficient representation, there is no reason that it should not be enlarged, if the Crown can find Catholics who possess the proper qualifications for such a post. But what Sir George Grey means by “the requisite alteration in the composition of the Senate” is very evident: his words doubtless point to such an alteration as would bring the Senate into harmony with its new relations to “the Catholic University:” they imply, therefore, the introduction on the Senate, not of Catholics simply, but of Catholics of a certain colour—Catholics who are in the confidence of the party who desire the destruction of the system they would be called upon to administer—such Catholics, for example, as Major

* At least it did according to the latest Calendar which I have at hand (that for 1861). How the case stands now I cannot precisely say; several recent vacancies having, for some mysterious reasons, not yet been filled up. The mystery has since (July 9th) been solved by the appointment (27th June, nine days after the Government had constitutionally ceased to rule) of a batch of new senators, amongst whom are Lord Dunsraven, Mr. Monsell, and Professor Sullivan.

O'Reilly, or Mr. Monsell, to whom I shall do no injustice in assuming that, as they have no faith in united education, and look upon it already as a failure, and as, on the other hand, they regard the denominational scheme as the true one, they would, as members of the Senate, so use their powers as to assist the definitive triumph of the system in which they believe.

But it has been argued, that the experience of the London University does not justify such apprehensions. Under that university, we are reminded, distinct educational systems also exist,—King's College, for example, representing the denominational, as University College represents the secular plan; yet these antagonistic schemes affect in no way the action of the Senate, the character of that body being essentially neutral. The inference suggested is, that in Ireland, also, we should have a governing body free from all bias—at least as far as the discharge of its public functions went—in favour of particular systems of education. Those who attach much weight to this argument seem to me to be singularly oblivious both of the salient facts of the present case, and of the avowed policy of the Government. Has it not been one of the grounds on which the Catholic Bishops have demanded a charter for their Catholic University, that their views are unrepresented in the Senate of the University of London? And has not Sir George Grey recognised the validity of this argument, when he speaks of "the requisite alteration in the composition of the Senate" as following from the admission to its degrees of the students of the Catholic College? Besides, we cannot overlook the distinctly avowed policy of the Government. In that speech at the opening of the session, in which his admirers see such profound statesmanship, Mr. Gladstone announced, as the basis of his Irish policy, the principle of governing Ireland, no longer according to imperial, but according to Irish ideas; and he particularly instanced education as eminently a department to which this rule was applicable. Now, I am not at present going to canvass the principle laid down by Mr. Gladstone—though, if I were, I think I could show, that, as left by him, it is capable of being turned to almost any conceivable account, good or bad, according to the taste or purpose of him who applies it; but with this

principle distinctly announced by the Government as the basis of their policy, and remembering that their entire action in this matter has been induced by a desire to conciliate that party which arrogates to itself the title, *par excellence*, of "Irish," and "Catholic," I ask, what, in the face of these facts, would be the value of the precedent of the London University, in connexion with the present controversy? Suppose the Government scheme carried, and that, when "the requisite alteration in the composition of the Senate" came to be made, Mr. Lowe, or some other advocate of the secular principle, objected to the appointment of religious partisans, urging as a precedent, the neutrality of the London University Senate, would not the ready answer be at hand, that this was falling into the precise error which the Government wished to avoid—that of applying English ideas to the exceptional circumstances of Ireland?

Nor is the precedent of the Irish National Board any more to the purpose than that of the London University. There is no need now to consider how far the course pursued by that Board since its reconstruction in 1860 might be used in the way of warning on the present occasion, on which perhaps something might be said; but, assuming that the practical results of that change have been in all respects satisfactory, what I contend is, that this would form no grounds for anticipating a like result from the contemplated changes in the Queen's University. For between the two cases there is this fundamental distinction, that in the one—that is to say, in the case of the National Board—the members, whatever may be their private sentiments, are bound, if not formally, at least in honour, by the fundamental rules of the National System, which are those of united education; whereas under the proposed changes in the Queen's University, the members would be bound by no rules whatever, while those who should be admitted in pursuance of Sir George Grey's promise to the Bishops would inevitably take their place on the Board as the partisans of a system opposed to that which now prevails. The paramount duty of these latter would not be, as is the case with the members of the National Board, to administer the institutions entrusted to them in conformity with the principles of united education, but, quite the contrary, to

represent on the Board the interests of denominationalism, and to promote these as far as their powers permitted.

It is under this aspect of the case, as involving the admission to the governing body of what is now a system of united education, of those who will enter that body avowedly as the enemies of united education, that the Government measure, apart from the objections to it on the general grounds which have been already stated, is obnoxious to the friends of that principle; and it is, I apprehend, the same consideration that gives the measure any value it possesses in the eyes of the enemies of the united system. Both parties also doubtless perceive that the present step cannot be a final one; that the sectarian and the mixed colleges, once co-ordinated under a central head, must in the end be treated according to the same rule, and that consequently the present measure will entail as an inevitable corollary the endowment of "the Catholic University." This at least is certain, that no party in Ireland has asked for, or desires, the proposed measure as a definitive scheme. On the contrary, they have each in turn, with unmistakeable emphasis, rejected it. The Bishops tell Sir George Grey that "if the changes referred to . . . be unaccompanied by an endowment of our Catholic University and a reconstruction of the Queen's Colleges, we cannot regard them as satisfactory to the Catholics of Ireland. . . . Without an endowment the proposal of the Government would confer but little, if any, substantial benefit upon our Catholic University, for degrees can be obtained through the London University, and property can be acquired and transmitted without a charter by availing of certain legal expedients." Doctor Woodlock, dealing with the same proposal when propounded by Sir Dominic Corrigan, and replying to his question urged in support of the "open" plan—"Where is the line to be drawn in the system of affiliation?" answers:—"It is to be drawn so as to secure for the Catholic University the position she is entitled to, at the head of Catholic education in Ireland. Less than this the Sovereign Pontiff will not sanction; and it was at his suggestion the University was first established. *With less than this the Bishops of Ireland will not be satisfied*; and

it was they who founded the University, and who by their continued and determined opposition to dangerous systems of education have brought this question to its present stage; *less than this our Catholic people will not accept,*" &c. Lastly, Professor Sullivan, representing, as I conjecture, another section of the party, is not less distinct in his repudiation of the principle of the scheme. "I am much mistaken," he says, "if there be half a dozen educated Catholics in Ireland who agree with Mr. O'Reilly and Sir Dominic Corrigan about the principle upon which that [the London University] is founded." This is the light in which the measure is regarded by those for whose special behoof it is designed. I need scarcely say that it finds no favour among the supporters of united education. In every one of the numerous memorials emanating from the different sections of this party, which are published in the correspondence lately presented to Parliament, the principle of the Government scheme is in the strongest terms condemned.

To sum up the substance of the foregoing remarks, this scheme of so-called University reform tends at once to depress the standard of education in Ireland, and to break up the mixed system. Based upon a principle, as I have attempted elsewhere to show, radically unsound, certainly unsupported by a single high authority, it has not even the poor merit of offering an effective compromise; for it meets no want, and it will settle no controversy. It is wholly uncalled for by any party in Ireland: as a definitive scheme it is positively offensive to every party. If accepted at all, it is avowedly only as a means towards an end which its authors repudiate. It has, however, one recommendation which in the eyes of the Government outweighs all that can be said against it: in the words of Mr. Fortescue, it enables the Government "to redeem the pledge which was given last year to his honourable friend the member for Tralee."

Believe me, dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

J. E. CAIRNES.

MILL HILL, HENDON, N.W.

15th June, 1866.

POSTSCRIPT.

While these sheets are passing through the press, it has transpired that a supplementary charter, effecting all the objects indicated in the several announcements of the late Government—so far as these may be accomplished without an Act of Parliament—has been issued, and has actually passed the Great Seal of Ireland. This has been done notwithstanding Mr. Gladstone's promise that the House of Commons should have ample opportunity for discussing the merits of the measure "before the Crown should be committed to any formal act." Mr. Fortescue, indeed, has stated in the House of Commons that the promised opportunity was afforded on two occasions—first, when Sir George Grey's letter to the Lord Lieutenant was laid before Parliament, and again, when on introducing the Irish Reform Bill he referred to the plans of the Government with reference to the Queen's University. Whether the announcements made on these occasions amounted to a technical fulfilment of Mr. Gladstone's promise or no, is really a question of no practical moment. Where every one has been deceived, I suppose deception must have been practised; and it is a simple matter of fact that, outside the limited circle of officials who were privy to this business, no one, whether friend or foe, understood the announcements in question in the sense which Mr. Fortescue assigns to them. The undeniable fact, therefore, is that the issuing and signing of this charter has been the act of a few officials performed while Parliament, absorbed in another subject, remained under the impression that the question was still open and reserved for its discussion. Now, if an act so performed is to determine definitively the policy of the country; if a system of education, long established, admittedly successful, approved by successive Parliaments, may be altered in its essential features, and perhaps broken up by such means, put in force under cover of the excitement caused by a Reform debate; if this can be done in the teeth of distinct pledges to the contrary given to Parliament, then it is plain constitutional government in Ireland is a mere name. The course taken by the late

Government has thus raised a question of immeasurably greater moment than even the character of the Irish educational system. That question is briefly this :—whether Ireland is in future to be governed by a clique, acting under the dictation of the Irish Ultramontane party—more remotely under that of the Sacred College at Rome—or by the British Parliament. In comparison with this issue the Irish University system becomes an affair of small account ; and what every constitutional politician, be he Liberal or Conservative, will desire, is, that it be decided quite irrespective of the merits of the particular measure which has been the occasion of raising it. As, for my part, I do not believe that the people of this country are prepared to deliver over a portion of Her Majesty's dominions to the rule of Ultramontane priests and their lay abettors, I cannot regard the signing of this charter under the circumstances I have described as settling in any degree the question with which it proposes to deal. On the contrary, I fully expect that in the result it will open this question more effectually than ever. Parliament, I feel assured, will find the means of asserting its authority, to the discomfiture of those who have put this slight upon it; and Irish University education will, I believe, receive its permanent form and character, not from the juggling of back-stairs intriguers, whether in Downing Street or Dublin, but from the constitutionally expressed opinion of the people of the United Kingdom.

J. E. C.

9th July, 1866.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

(A.)

Extract from Professor Nesbitt's Pamphlet, pp. 15—23.

Charge of injustice to Roman Catholics in the Collegiate Appointments.—I now come to a topic which Dr. Corrigan says he approached with reluctance, and into which, I assure you, I follow him with a like feeling. It is, however, a necessary part of the task I have assigned myself.

The point to which I refer, is the allegation that the principle of religious equality upon which the Queen's Colleges were founded has been departed from,—a position which Dr. Corrigan seeks to maintain by contrasting two ministerial statements with the actual administration of the Colleges.

The first statement I have already cited. It is that in which Sir James Graham speaks “of the Collegiate system as avowedly an extension of the National System of Education.” This statement Dr. Corrigan regards as a ministerial assurance or pledge “that the principle of the system of National Education was to be the principle for the Queen's University and Colleges ;” and he holds that in both the principle has been infringed. As regards the University, the infringement consists in this—“that the Senate does not include, like the National Board, an equal number of Protestants and Catholics.” “The Senate of the Queen's University,” he says, “may be considered analogous in its constitution and action, in many respects, to the Board of National Education. The Board of National Education consists of twenty commissioners ; these commissioners are equally divided into Protestants and Catholics, ten of each ; and on this mainly depends the success of the system, for this equal division carries with it an assurance of justice and impartiality. Were they all one-sided, they might be still impartial [our English neighbours will perhaps think this possible only for Irishmen], but ‘Cæsar's wife must be free even from suspicion.’ The Senate of the Queen's University does not consist, as on the same principle it should, of an equal number of Protestants and Catholics.”

Now a very brief statement of facts will suffice to show the candour of this objection. The ministerial statement was made in 1845. Dr. Corrigan was nominated to the Senate in 1850, and that constitution

of the National Board on which we are told the success of the system mainly depends, and which, we are further led to believe, secured Dr. Corrigan's services to the Queen's University, was first introduced in 1860.*

What then Dr. Corrigan's charge of ill faith comes to is this, that some fifteen years after Sir James Graham's declaration that the collegiate system was identical in principle with that of primary instruction, and ten years after Dr. Corrigan's appointment to the Senate, a change, not contemplated at the time Sir James Graham's declaration was made, and in fact, as I shall presently show, of a nature which that statesman, rightly or wrongly, regarded as inadmissible, is made in the constitution of the National Board, and because a corresponding change is not made in the Senate of the Queen's University, the original principle on which the Colleges were founded has been departed from, and the understanding on which Dr. Corrigan accepted office is violated !

So far as to the first count in the indictment—that which relates to the University. A similar one is brought against the Colleges. We are told that a direct ministerial pledge was given that a certain proportion of the Professors should be Catholics, and that in the appointment of professors the pledge has been systematically ignored.

Now it is no doubt true that it was stated by Sir J. Graham, in replying to the memorial of the Roman Catholic bishops, that in certain cases the profession of the Roman Catholic faith would be an additional recommendation. But this very language implies, what Dr. Corrigan tells us the minister explicitly stated, that the first consideration would be competence. And that competence did not then bear the fantastic sense which some would now give it, may be seen from the language of Sir Robert Peel, who, in showing that it would be the interest of any ministry to give the most liberal consideration to the claims of Catholics, at the same time declared "that the honour and interest of the Crown were involved in the appointment of the *most* competent persons to these professorships." Again, when it is said that the minister, though he could not assent to legislation on the subject, admitted that the demand was "reasonable in principle," it should be further stated that the demand was accompanied by a yet further requirement, that some six chairs, including those of logic, geology, and anatomy, should be filled exclusively by Catholics, and that the ministerial reply was that "the proposition could not for a moment be entertained." The truth of the matter is that the principle laid down for the selection of professors—and none other could have been laid down consistently with the constitution of the Colleges—was that of fitness for the office, not the profession of a particular

Dr. Corrigan forgets that when Sir James Graham introduced the Colleges Bill, religious equality did not mean the numerical equality of religious sects. The proportion of Roman Catholics to Protestants on the National Board was then four to seven, but amongst the four were a Murray and a Blake, and it may be that Catholic interests were no less secure in their hands than in those of the numerous guardians of the faith who have succeeded them. When Dr. Corrigan took his seat at the Senate, the proportion was four to nine.

form of religious belief ; that on this ground the Government refused to allocate particular chairs to members of the Roman Catholic Church, or to reserve for them a definite proportion of the whole ; but that it was at the same time conceded that, saving the paramount consideration of merit, it would, under certain circumstances, be a strong recommendation, *en seconde ligne*, that a candidate should be a Roman Catholic.

I need not tell you how faithfully this programme has been carried out. You know, as I do—and but for his letter I should have said, as Dr. Corrigan does, how anxious successive Governments have been to appoint Roman Catholics—how it had occasionally required all the efforts of those upon whom the working of the Colleges devolved, and who were answerable for their success, to make the adherence to the Roman Catholic faith only an additional, not the primary, recommendation for a professor's chair. I am less acquainted with the circumstances of Belfast than with those of the other Colleges ; but I have made strict inquiries, and I am told by those most conversant with the facts, that the charge of “the exclusion or elimination of Catholics,” preferred against that College, is quite without foundation. Two of the original professors were Catholics. One of these, an eminent philologist, died ; the other transferred his services to the University of Melbourne. In the period which has elapsed since the foundation of the Colleges, the same authorities assure me, there have been only three occasions on which there has been a serious competition on the part of Roman Catholic candidates. On the first of these, the Roman Catholic candidate was, I gladly acknowledge, a man of great accomplishment, and of remarkable purity and simplicity of character. He was not appointed, but an excellent appointment was made ; and so I leave the case, merely asking that some weight should be attached to the assurance to which I have referred, that it was not religious belief that turned the scale. On the second occasion a man was appointed who stood out conspicuous above the other competitors, one whose claims even a Catholic tribunal would have found it difficult to set aside, and whose selection even his rivals must have approved—

“Pan etiam Arcadia dicat se iudice victum.”

On the third, a Catholic, a highly distinguished alumnus of the College, was chosen amidst general applause.

As regards the other Colleges the charge is simply ridiculous. I assert without the slightest hesitation—and if any one desires detailed proof, I am prepared to enter into an examination of the particular appointments—that in no single instance from the opening of the Colleges has any Catholic competitor with anything like equal pretensions to a Protestant rival been in these Colleges set aside. If the rule of merit was ever departed from, the relaxation was in favour of Catholics. I had rather, however, not be forced to such a scrutiny ; the task would be invidious. I choose to leave the matter to the successive administrations whose conduct is arraigned, fully cognizant as they are of the facts. It is more pleasing, and it will at the same time best illustrate the unsoundness of Dr. Corrigan's principle of

selection, to refer to the results of that which, in common with the founders of the Colleges, I regard as the true principle, and in doing so I will take an instance which those acquainted with the condition of education in Ireland will admit to be not the least favourable to the views of Dr. Corrigan—I mean the chair of mathematics.

Up to the present this chair has been filled in the several Colleges by eight professors. Of these, four have been senior wranglers; one was a man who could derive no honour from universities, but from whom universities sought to gain lustre by enrolling him among their members; the others have been taken from the *élite* of the University of Dublin. The tangible results of the teaching of these men have been remarkable; but I attach more importance to that for which we have no measure—the influence they must have exercised on the youth with whom they have come in contact.

This is what *has* been, under the *régime* of unrestricted competition. And now let us for a moment speculate on what *might have* been, had Dr. Corrigan's principle of selection been admitted—had, as he proposes, Protestants been held ineligible till at least one-third of the chairs in each College was filled by Catholics. To begin with, most of these men would have been excluded from the chairs they have filled.* They have all been Protestants, save one, whom let me mention *in memoriam*—a Catholic, but a man whose “praise was in all the churches”—the lamented Mulcahy. But the evil would not have ended with depriving the Colleges of the services of these men. The source of supply would have been cut off—it could not, of course, be expected that superior men would submit to the degradation of a mock candidature, or stand waiting for “a Protestant vacancy,”—and the era of what are called “the competent” would have been definitely inaugurated.

And whence, under existing circumstances, could a sufficient supply of the competent be secured, if Catholicism is to be a “note” of competence? At first sight it is not easy to see. No one dreams that Catholic intellect is less acute than Protestant; but to get an adequate supply of Catholic intellect of the required maturity, it is necessary to have a sufficient seed-plot for its cultivation, and at present it would not be easy to point to such. Less than one-twentieth of the students of Dublin are Catholics. The proportion at the English and Scotch Universities is still smaller. The Queen's University does more for Catholic education than, perhaps, all the others put together; but, then, it has been only a few years in existence; its students come with a much more limited stock of knowledge than the *élite* of the old universities, and there are none of those valuable foundations within their reach which enable the students of those universities to prolong and deepen their studies; lastly, the ablest of them are generally carried away by the attractions of the public service. To Dr. Corrigan, however, the matter is all plain sailing. “There is never,” he observes, with great *naïveté*, “any difficulty in Ireland in procuring competent persons from

* A consideration of the condition of the Colleges at the time of the several appointments will show that nearly all the candidates would, under this rule, have been disqualified.

either side." He has ascertained, for instance, that the Commissioners of National Education have had no difficulty in procuring Catholic clerks for the Education Office. But he is not satisfied with even this proof: he takes "a higher test." He finds, amongst other distinctions he enumerates, that within the last seven years some sixteen Catholic students have obtained honours at the matriculation examination of the London University; and he infers that, with such facts before us, "it is presuming too far on credulity to believe that a Catholic teacher could not be found with Latin and Greek enough for Galway or Belfast, or even for Cork."

Here, then, we have, at last, a definition of "competence"—"Latin and Greek enough for Galway or Belfast, or even for Cork"—and if clerks for the Education Office are forthcoming, surely professors with this slender equipment cannot be far to seek. The only pity is that they should be sought at all. Dr. Corrigan has already told us that these languages, with the other branches of liberal education, may be taught at home; and this being the case, there is surely no reason for transferring to a college those worthy teachers who are already in their several localities doing all that is required—no reason at least but one, that they may be secured a competence; which, after all, is perhaps more germane to the matter than we might at first suppose.*

It may seem waste of labour to dwell on reasoning of this kind, but it is well we should see clearly where the principle of "competence" will lead, and we may be grateful to Dr. Corrigan for showing us the way. This he has done effectually. Once give up the principle of choosing the best, and there is no safeguard against taking up with the worst. Never was there a case in which the adage was more true—

"Si paullum summo decessit, vergit ad imum."†

Proposed mode of appointing Professors.—Perhaps of all the strange things in this strange letter the strangest is the way in which competence is to be ascertained. The "mistake of [appointing senior wranglers and the like, with now and then a man of original genius] has been committed equally by all the successive Governments which have been in office for the last fifteen years," and may easily be made by their successors. It is, therefore, necessary to find a tribunal which, recognising that "the cleverest men are by no means the best

* A friend once said to me that he never heard mention of a "competent man" without suspecting a job.

† Dr. Corrigan urges the appointment of Catholics, as such, by the example of the Belfast Academical Institution. In that Institution, it appears, a particular religious communion which had acquired the power, set about appointing exclusively professors of their own faith, and the remedy applied was the application of what Dr. Mommson calls "the collegiate principle"—that is, the appointment of a colleague to each professor to neutralize his influence. One would have thought that the obvious lesson from this case is the inexpediency of appointing professors on sectarian grounds.

professors," shall be more likely to choose the "competent." The Government, then, is to be superseded, and the appointment is to rest in a local board made up of the Council of the Queen's College in which the vacancy may arise, the municipality, and the neighbouring gentry; and candidates for professorships are to lecture before this august body, which will thus be able to dispense with testimonials,—“testimonials can be had in any number and for any office,”—and to judge for itself of “their power of conveying information lucidly in a lecture-room.” It requires some effort of imagination even to conceive an arrangement of this kind, but it is worth while to make the effort. Just fancy the Town Commissioners of Galway sitting in judgment on the lucidity of Mr. D’Arcy Thompson’s analysis of a chorus of *Æschylus*, or a Town Councillor of Cork criticizing the late Dr. Boole’s exposition of the fundamental conceptions of the differential calculus.

“Spectatum admissi risum teneatis.”

But the spectacle would be impossible. Of course no man of eminence could fulfil the conditions of such a candidature, even if he were not stricken with the fatal disqualification of being a Protestant. “Competence” would have exclusive possession of the field.

To me—if I may express the humble judgment of one who has watched the appointment of professors from the opening of the Colleges with the utmost care—it seems that the present method of selection is as nearly perfect as any that could be devised. The Government is alone responsible for the appointments that are made, but this is far from implying that the Government appoints arbitrarily, or on its unaided judgment. In every instance the Colleges are fully and fairly consulted through their heads, and in this way the Government secures all the assistance which enlightened self-interest can supply; at the same time that the Colleges, while exercising their legitimate influence, enjoy immunity from the solicitations of candidates. The actual system is in effect as nearly as possible identical with that which has given to the German Universities the most distinguished expositors of every branch of science and learning.*

* Mr. O’Reilly, in his “Two Articles on Education,” tells us that “the Professors (in the Prussian Universities) are named by the King on the proposition by the Faculties of a list of three.” I can endorse the statement of Professor Cairnes, “that the plan adopted in the Queen’s Colleges does not in effect differ from this.”

(B.)

Extracts from the Colleges Act and the Statutes.

COLLEGES ACT.

[CHAPTER LXVI. 8th & 9th Vic.]

XIV. And for the better enabling every student in the said Colleges to receive religious instruction according to the creed which he professes to hold, be it enacted, That it shall be lawful for the President and Professors, or other governing body of each of the said Colleges which shall be constituted in and by the said Letters Patent, to assign lecture rooms within the precincts of such College, wholly or in part, for the use of such religious teachers as shall be recognised by such governing body, subject in each case to the approval of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, and also subject to the like approval to make rules concerning the days and times when such religious instruction shall be given therein, and for securing that the same shall not interfere with the general discipline of the College : Provided always, that no student shall be compelled by any rule of the College to attend any theological lecture or religious instruction other than is approved by his parents or guardians, and that no religious test shall be administered to any person in order to entitle him to be admitted a student of any such College, or to hold any office therein, or to partake of any advantage or privilege thereof ; but this proviso shall not be deemed to prevent the making of regulations for securing the due attendance of the students for divine worship at such Church or Chapel as shall be approved by their parents or guardians, respectively.

STATUTES.—CHAPTER VI.

VIII. “ That if any Professor shall, in any Lecture or Examination, or in the discharge of any other part of his Collegiate duty, teach or advance any doctrine, or make any statement derogatory to the truths of revealed religion, or injurious or disrespectful to the religious convictions of any portion of his class or audience, or shall introduce or discuss political or polemical subjects tending to produce contention or excitement, such Professor shall be summoned before the Council, and, upon sufficient evidence of his having so transgressed, shall be formally warned and reprimanded by the President ; and if any such Professor be guilty of a repetition of said or similar offence, the President shall forthwith suspend him from his functions, and take steps

officially to recommend to the Crown his removal from office, as having transgressed the Statutes of the College, and violated his obligations to its authorities.

IX. That every Professor shall, upon entering into office, sign the following Declaration :—I, A. B., do hereby promise to the President and Council of the Queen's College, that I will faithfully, and to the best of my ability, discharge the duties of Professor of _____ in said College ; and I further promise and engage that in Lectures and Examinations, and in the performance of all other duties connected with my chair, I will carefully abstain from teaching or advancing any doctrine, or making any statement derogatory to the truths of revealed religion, or injurious or disrespectful to the religious convictions of any portion of my class or audience. And I moreover promise to the said President and Council that I will not introduce or discuss in my place or capacity of _____ any subject of politics or polemics tending to produce contention or excitement, nor will I engage in any avocation which the President and Council shall judge inconsistent with my office ; but I will, as far as in me lies, promote on all occasions the interests of education, and the welfare of the College.

We will and ordain that any Student guilty of any of the following offences shall be liable to expulsion from the College ; but it shall be competent to the Council, shall they deem it more conducive to the discipline of the College and the reformation of the offender, to impose some lighter punishment for the same :—

CHAPTER XVII.

I. Habitual neglect of attendance for Divine Worship, at such Church or Chapel as shall be approved by his parents or guardians.

II. Habitual neglect of attendance on the religious instruction provided for Students of his church or denomination, in the licensed boarding-house in which he may reside.

III. Immoral or dishonest practices.

IV. Treasonable or seditious conduct.

V. Drunkenness.

VI. Grievous offences against College rules or discipline.

VI. Wilful and serious injury to the property of the College.

CHAPTER XVIII.

I. We will and ordain that every Matriculated Student, being under the age of twenty-one years, shall be required to reside during the College Terms with his parent or guardian, or with some relation or friend to whose care he shall have been committed by his parent or guardian, and approved of by the President, or in a boarding-house licensed and arranged for the reception of students in manner herein-after described. . . .

V. That if the Bishop, Moderator, or the constituted authority of any church or religious denomination, shall notify to the President his or their desire that there shall be boarding-houses specially licenced for the

exclusive use of the Students of such church or denomination, and shall specially recommend persons applying for licence to establish the same, the President shall, in every such case, grant such licence, provided he shall obtain satisfactory evidence of the suitableness of the proposed establishment, and of its means of providing for the health and comfort of the Students.

VI. That in the case of Collegiate Students residing in a seminary or school which is under the special jurisdiction of the Bishop, Moderator, or the constituted authority of any church or religious denomination, the President shall, on receiving a notification from such authority, consider residence in such seminary or school as equivalent to residence in the house of a parent or guardian, and shall exempt such seminary or school from licence or inspection, but shall require the same attendance at matriculation as in the case of a Student residing with his parent or guardian.

VII. That for the better maintenance of moral and religious discipline in the licensed boarding-houses, such clergymen or ministers as We shall, from time to time, by warrant under Our Sign Manual, appoint Deans of Residences, shall have the moral care and spiritual charge of the Students of their respective creeds residing in the licensed boarding-houses.

VIII. That the Deans of Residences shall have authority to visit the licensed boarding-houses in which Students of their respective creeds reside, for the purpose of affording religious instruction to such Students, and shall also have power, with the concurrence of the Bishop, Moderator, or other ecclesiastical authority, respectively, to make regulations for the due observance of the religious duties of such Students, and for securing their regular attendance on Divine Worship. . . .

IX. That no clergyman or minister shall be competent to assume or continue to hold the office of Dean of Residences, unless approved by the Bishop, Moderator, or constituted authority of his church or religious denomination.

X. That the Registrar shall, at the commencement of every Collegiate Session, furnish each Dean of Residences with a list of the names and residences of the Students of his religious persuasion who may reside in the licensed boarding-houses.

XI. That each Dean of Residences shall, at the termination of every Collegiate Session, report to the President on the general conduct of the Students under his moral care and spiritual charge, in the licensed boarding-houses, and on the manner in which discipline, regarding such Students, has been observed in the several licensed boarding-houses in which they reside.

